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The Cover of the Original Edition

HISTORY
OF THE *Title*
PRUSSIAN
MONARCHY,

FROM ITS RISE TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY
LEOPOLD RANKE,
AUTHOR OF "LIVES OF THE POPES," "HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION,"
ETC.

TRANSLATED BY
PROFESSOR DEMMLE.



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HISTORY OF THE PRUSSIAN MONARCHY.

BOOK I.

OF THE RISE OF THE BRANDENBURG-PRUSSIAN POWER.

AT the side of those great princes who have founded and propagated supreme power, there appear in German history other heroes who gained immortality precisely by opposing the former; and it might not be easy to decide which of the two have had the largest share in the gradual development of the nation.

The one have given it the consciousness of its unity, and by the possession of the imperial power, not only a high rank in the world, but also an influence upon civilization no more to be restrained; they have paved the way for the Church of Christ, and created a firm groundwork for public order. The others, on their side, have defended the liberty of national genius, which did not find full scope in those general ideas which, cultivated on a foreign soil, were sometimes handed down without being quite understood. And it is their merit, not to have allowed individual and

particular life to wither in those forms into which the general course of history had moulded them.

After having devoted to the former that attention which they so eminently deserve by their qualities and their achievements, one ought certainly not to overlook the latter : they form a succession which has become more remarkable from one epoch to the other.

The first of these, inasmuch as they were not enabled either by their birth, or by the fortune of war, themselves to aspire to the crown, could not but perish. They combated a power, which, by its very duties at home and abroad amongst so many mighty encroaching barbarous enemies, must have been strong. Yet the nation has not forgotten them. One especially has survived in its memory—Duke Ernest of Swabia—who chose rather to keep faith with his friend than to enjoy the favour of his emperor; and when expelled for it by princes and bishops from the communion of the Church and the pale of the empire, retired into the wilds of the forests, and there, when he saw himself overpowered, sought a voluntary death.

But times followed when men of his stamp in the rising territorial sovereignty, which had deeply rooted in the nation, gained new importance, and, above all, an impregnable stronghold.

Henry the Lion may be taken as the best representative of this phasis of German history. His entering with the emperor into a contest for power and authority, after all profited but the pope and the Lombards.

But when afterwards he determined to be what he was born for, the prince of a German country, and when he succeeded in defending his hereditary possessions in Lower Saxony against the armies of the emperor, he set an example which many other great houses and states, with or without any fault of theirs, have been compelled to follow. What severe struggles was Frederic the Warlike obliged to sustain for the territorial independence of Austria, on the result of which the house of Habsburg afterwards principally founded its power. In Middle Germany, another Frederic, surnamed "with the bitten cheek," of the house of Wettin, made himself most conspicuous. He once upon a time possessed not a castle to dwell in, not a charger to mount; a chronicler describes how he wandered a fugitive through the country, so that a shepherd tending his flock might have taken him prisoner. But soon after we see him winning battles on which the pride of his countrymen has revelled for centuries. He withstood the armies of two emperors of the most indomitable spirit of conquest: he himself was ruined in body and mind, but he left the land of his forefathers to his house. I will not inquire here, whether, as some pretend, it would not have been better, if this, and other opponents of the emperors had been obliged to yield. People were once for ever quite accustomed to regard the imperial dignity as a property belonging to the common body of the princes and estates by whom it was conferred. As soon as he who was invested with it wanted to use the au-

thority which it gave, to increase the power of his own house, every one thought that he had a good right to withstand him. Of all these opponents there was hardly one perhaps who ever thought of breaking up the empire, upon which, on the contrary, they felt resting as on their basis: they only wished to maintain their political existence against a one-sided exercise of power. And the estates at least perfectly coincided with this view of the case. Of all the emperors, however brilliant qualities many of them might have possessed, not one since Otho the Great gained an honourable surname from the people; it was lucky enough for them if they were not entirely forgotten. Yet, among the territorial princes, we find everywhere the Joyful, and Bold, the Iron, the Earnest, the Illustrious, the Wise, and the Good. They stood nearer the sympathies of men; their example shewed much more plainly how much eminent personal qualities were able to do, and how great their value was. Provincial pride would indulge in their praise, whilst the lustre of the imperial dignity was moving in distant impenetrable spheres, and never could awaken that hearty interest of sympathy which is always a very different feeling from that of mere admiration.

The general position of affairs was by degrees entirely changed.

In former times the emperor in his power had been considered as the living and fixed centre of the whole body, and by him the rulers of the provinces were appointed and deposed; afterwards the power of the

estates, especially of the princes, appeared as the fixed and permanent element. The imperial dignity was looked upon as an authority of office which might be conferred, but also revoked.

Under these circumstances the German secular princes roused themselves to the greatest achievement, on the whole, which their body has ever entered upon.

Nobody will derive the religious or theological idea which led to the reformation of the Church from the designs of the German princes;—its origin sprang from an incomparably deeper source; but the princes and estates gave to this undertaking a strong basis, and all that support which it needed in order not to be crushed in its very birth.

Its original idea was of universal German tendency. It was intended that the imperial power, which in its then weakened state was administered only in a one-sided and insufficient manner, should be reformed by a more vigorous co-operation of the estates, and brought back to a more energetic and efficient state. But as in pursuance of this task abuses also of the spiritual power were encountered, the idea proceeded one step farther, and the next thought was to reform the latter as well as the secular one, and to bring it nearer the nation, agreeably to the views of the teachers dissenting from the tenets of the old doctrine.

Most of the secular princes gave their consent; the imperial towns, with a few exceptions, joined them; by far the greater part of the nation cheerfully agreed to it. But, as was only natural, resistance

was met with, especially from the eminently powerful spiritual elements of the German hierarchy. And the goal which was sought remained very far distant.

After tedious quarrels at the Diets, and an armed contest full of perilous vicissitudes with the then Emperor, the Reformers were obliged to desist from that idea, which had also before yielded precedence to that of self-defence.

Thus much was, however, attained to, that what could not have been established in the empire was carried out in the particular countries and territories, princely as well as municipal, and gained an uncontested existence. The power of the empire, as it now existed, as well as of the Emperor, was bound by law to recognize this change, and to extend over it the general guarantee and protection of the state.

And this was already a result deserving every acknowledgement. The German nation gained a high position in the spheres of intellectual life. It was the first to succeed in successfully breaking the circle of that hierarchy which comprehended the West, as similar forms of faith extended over the East, and to make way again in the world for the original spirit of positive religion without arbitrary dogma, a tendency which found entrance everywhere in Europe, best agreeing, however, with the nature and disposition of the German mind, from the unfathomable depth of which it sprang like an irresistible stream.

We might coincide with the opinion of those who see in this epoch, the second half of the sixteenth

century, a golden and classical era of German civilization, which at least was never more widely spread than at that time, if theological controversies had not taken a too prominent position. The power of the princes, which had so much aided the reformation, got a stronger basis by it. Everywhere the exclusion, or remodelling of the spiritual powers, rallied the estates of the different provinces round their princes; it was the epoch when constitutional institutions were most flourishing, especially in the North and in the East of Germany. Only in one point, that of the clerical organization, there was difference, but as little a one as possible. All the other elements handed down by history were preserved, or established still stronger.

But this one difference was sufficient once more to call forth a danger threatening the whole. It prepared the ulterior fortunes of the German people and the German mind.

The Catholicism, combated by it, and superseded on a vast extent of ground, cleared of many errors and abuses, but at the same time filled anew with the spirit of bigotry and persecution, had again acquired exclusive possession of Southern Europe, where the greatest monarchy in existence, that of Spain, which had the treasures of India at command, paid to it unconditional devotion; from thence it had once more spread over Germany, and eluding all precautions, engrossed the territories of the spiritual princes and dignitaries.

Among the houses of the secular princes, two, although sometimes wavering, had at last not joined the rest, but become the most active defenders of the restored Roman Catholic doctrines. These houses were the Bavarian and the Austrian. As to the former, it is evident that by doing so it has wasted its powers in acting a mistaken part. Austria, on the contrary, although with regard to its internal economy, being only a territorial principality, just as the others were, nevertheless, after having been so long a time invested with the imperial dignity, possessed an incontestable and mighty interest to revive the idea of the old rule of the empire; the religious dissensions, far from weakening the imperial power, gave it rather,—as the spiritual estates of the empire who had formerly joined the opposition now found in it their principal support,—the possibility and the prospect of recovering by means of these auxiliaries its sway over the whole.

And thus a war broke out which devastated Germany for thirty years:—never perhaps has a great nation been visited by a more ruinous one. It was at the same time a civil and a foreign contest. The die was cast, as well for the political as for the intellectual life of the nation. We shall have to say more about it in time: here we only allude to the result which is generally known, that if it had appeared for a moment as if Protestantism, and its auxiliary, the power of the territorial princes, were to be destroyed, or at least to be reduced to a very scanty measure of in-

dependence, the latter not only came out unhurt, but even rose to higher consideration than before ; the imperial power also was maintained in its alliance with the spiritual estates of the empire, consequently by no means as a mere shadow, yet, after all, hemmed in by so many barriers, or rather counteractions, that an undertaking like the last was no more to be apprehended.

In this manner the power of the territorial princes was raised another step. In its first demonstrations it had been crushed, because of not being thoroughly organized ; then it had acted in isolated egotism ; upon this it had devoted itself to the great general aspirations of the nation ; and by this means it had established itself on a constitutional basis, yet still under the protection of the balanced powers of the empire : but now, at least in the North and in the East, it was all but independent upon the latter, and, what was the main point, it could take its part in the general affairs of Europe. For the unity of the nation, and its power abroad, it had doubtless already grown too strong. Great and important duties weighed upon it too ; the one, which seems to us the more important of the two, was to oppose the influence which foreign states had acquired in that contest, and which threatened to deprive the German nation of all its consideration abroad, and to neutralize its energies at home ; the other, to arrange public affairs of the different territories so as to make them serve that purpose, and at the same time to promote the general welfare.

On this basis, and, if we are not mistaken, with a consciousness of those particular duties, besides the others, also the Brandenburg Prussian territorial principality has developed itself, and risen to be the greatest power of all.

The task imposed by the great course of events over which the will of no one had any control, to take a European-German position, and to establish an order of things resting upon its own groundwork, has been attempted elsewhere, but most successfully accomplished here.

Our first Book shall set forth how this came to pass, especially in the seventeenth century, and in the beginning of the eighteenth. Yet we shall be obliged to take our time to begin from the very first beginning, in order at least to get a general view of the ground on which the whole rests, and how one thing has proceeded from the other.

REVIEW OF THE EARLY HISTORY.

The March of Brandenburg belongs to those provinces, which during the general advance of the German nation towards the East, were formed in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It was originally, like Silesia, Mecklenburg, and Pomerania, like Prussia and Livonia, a German colony on a little cultivated ground. Among these settlements it may be considered as having been the strongest from the very beginning.

In the neighbouring provinces, the Slavonian

princes themselves favoured the immigration of Germans into their territories; and it is not to be gainsaid that in thus acting, they belied to a certain extent their own origin and the traditions of the past. On the remoter coasts, where one of the religious military orders got into possession, there arose soon an internal division between the settlers who came in the train of the knights, and remained in the country, and the ever changing body of the order which held the dominion. In the Brandenburg Marches, on the contrary, the German dynasty, under the auspices of which the colonization was accomplished, afforded a common centre round which a people of kindred race rallied in the natural course of events. Possession was taken on the strength of the rights which this dynasty, that of the Ascanians, claimed by inheritance, or by purchase, or cession, and it was accomplished very gradually, so that the institutions of the old German provinces, as those of the Northern March, could take root in the newly acquired ones; at the same time, as they always had to draw the sword, the exertions of the war kept up a vigorous life in the whole body politic. Above the numerous nobility which settled, as well for purposes of cultivation as for defence—above bishoprics and abbeys, which besides their spiritual duties, bound themselves also to those of warfare—above the well regulated towns and rural communities, however various the privileges which might be granted to most of them—there arose the strong power of the Margraves, which

held the whole together, and promoted its progress. The Ascanians were a warlike race, susceptible of cultivation, continually conquering,* and at the same time open-handed, so that life sprang up in their track. They occupied early an eminent political position among the dynasties of Germany. Their acquisitions extended over Thuringia, Misnia, Lusatia, and Silesia: the electoral dignity which they held, gave to them, as well as to the country, a high rank in the empire; in the New March and Little Pomerania, the Poles retreated before them; on the Pomeranian coasts, they protected the German cities from the superior power of the Danes.

It might be questioned whether they would have succeeded in organizing this power to a still greater extent, yet they were not destined even to attempt it.

It is said, that so late as in the beginning of the fourteenth century, nineteen of this race had once been assembled at the Markgrafenberg (Hill of the Margraves), near Rathenau, and already in the year 1320, there was not one heir left of any of them.

That a pseudo-Ascanian, Waldemar, found credit, only shews how deeply the attachment to this race was seated in the hearts of the people. Thus, after the fall of the Hohenstauffen, a new Frederick II appeared; and in the same manner the false Sebastian and Demetrius gained partizans in Portugal and

* Pulkawa in Dobner Monum. iii, 212. "Joannes et Otto fratres adolescentes sancti,—in concordia unione—insimul opprimentes
b ltantes amicos et terras et reditus ampliantes."

Russia. It is, as it were, a genealogical phenomenon, for the people of those early ages only reluctantly and with difficulty familiarized themselves with the idea of not being headed any more by their native dynasties.

And in Brandenburg it had really the appearance as if the fall of the princely house should also bring on that of the country. It became a dependency of the imperial crown, for which the houses of Wittelsbach and Luxemburg were contending, so that the feuds of these families were raging also here, and their conflicting domestic and foreign policy, their power and their debility reacted also upon these parts. Immediately in the beginning, the March lost its dependencies; soon after, an archbishop of Magdeburg, a duke of Mecklenburg, might trample upon it with impunity; to which was added, that at last a family of powerful noblemen, being in possession of more than twenty strong castles, at the head of warlike retainers, who were maintained by the proceeds of aids and fines, held a sway which enroached in such a manner upon the royal authority, that its legal exercise became impossible; one day, a Quitzow was received with music and festivities, and conducted home by a town which had placed itself under his protection;* and the next day he thought himself justified to drive off the cattle from the common pasturage, under pretext that the aid had not been paid: when the towns-people pursued him, he scattered them, and threw their leading men into his dungeons.

* Wusterwitz, in *Angelus' Annales Marchiæ*, p. 185.

Robbery and war were the rule, peace and order the exception. The nearer one approached the March, writes a contemporary chronicler, the more unsafe was travelling and way-faring; every one was puffed up with his own greatness, and did what was right in his own eyes.* At length the last Luxemburg emperor, Sigismund, could not disguise from himself any longer, that being fully occupied with the dissensions of the empire and the Church, he could not maintain the government of the March, and entrusted its exercise to a friend and kinsman, who in return supported him with money, and to whom besides he was under the greatest obligations,—the burghgrave Frederic of Nuremberg.

Frederic belonged to a house, the origin of which recedes from the eye of the historian into the dimness of those centuries in which the records which still survive do not yet distinctly mark the names even of very conspicuous families. For the first time, with historical certainty, we find his ancestors in possession of the castle of Nuremberg, from whence, by inheritance, by purchase, or by investiture, luckily and adroitly, they spread in the circles of Upper and Lower Franconia. In the general affairs of the empire and of Christendom, they took a most active share. One of them mediated the election of Rudolf of Habsburg, and called him, from the petty local feuds in

* Buchholz, History of the Electoral March, v. 174. "*Marchiam misere, proh dolor! bello, aliisque calamitatibus afflictam, et ruinæ totali proximam.*"

which he was engaged, to the affairs of the empire, which were to raise his house into greatness. Another fought in the battle of Nicopoli, and saved the life of the then general of the Christians, his brother-in-law Sigismund. This was the brother of Frederic, who for the same Sigismund* procured the imperial crown by his determined conduct at the election, and now first appeared as his deputy in the March.

It was already something, that once more after so long a time, a vigorous and judicious man took upon himself to govern the March. He could not effect anything in open warfare against those in whose hands the power lay; he conquered by battering down, with the help of the unwieldy but powerful pieces of artillery which he had procured, the walls fourteen feet thick of their strong castles, behind which they had until now been safe from every attack. In a few years he succeeded so far, that he could proclaim a general cessation of feuds in the empire,† according to which every one who was his, or his friend's enemy, should be considered, and proceeded against as the enemy of all. Yet all this would have been only temporary, if after so many eminent proofs of energy, and being gained also by fresh services, the emperor, who had no male heir, had not left to the burghgrave the hereditary possession of the electoral dignity. Other claims and rights of Sigismund went

* Boëhmer, *Regesta imperii* 1246—1313, p. 56. Kopp, *King Rudolf I*, 813.

† Instrument in *Raumer's Codex Diplomaticus Brandeb.* i. 82.

with the hand of his daughter to Austria. For the March and the counts of Zollern, the most important day of their history is the eighteenth of April 1417, on which the emperor Sigismund solemnly invested the burghgrave in the market place of Constance, gave the standard with the coat of arms of the March into his hand, and received his homage as elector.*

This afforded a hope for the country to rally, and to rise once more into consequence; for the house of Zollern an arena was opened of action and glory worthy of their abilities, which it was even calculated to call forth.

The elector Frederic I, and his two sons, Frederic II and Albert, surnamed Achilles, who, one after the other, succeeded him, remind us of those fabulous heroes of antiquity, who coming from distant parts, bring order and discipline to native tribes, and thereby establish their own power.

How often was not Frederic I obliged to draw the sword in order to maintain the peace which he had founded! He thought it quite venial to have for this purpose the church bells cast into cannon. The manliness of his character did not prevent him from engaging in the liberal pursuits of literature. It is well known that he was acquainted with, and fond of, Petrarch; his German books were deemed by him of sufficient value to be mentioned in his will. The

* An authentic description of this ceremony is to be found in the letter of the delegates of Frankfort in Aschbach, Emperor Sigismund II, 444.

personal deliberations of the princes of the empire at those times had this good effect, that by the repeated exchange of opinions with their equals, their natural abilities were called forth and matured. In ecclesiastical and legal affairs nobody shewed more judgment and moderation than Frederic the First. It was at his house at Basle that the first overtures of peace were made to the Hussites.

Frederic II, less successful in the field than in treaties, nevertheless freed the Old March from the claims of allegiance which the archbishops of Magdeburg had until now maintained, and recovered the New March from the order of Teutonic knights, to which it had been pledged for so long a time. His memory ought to be revived by a monument near the castle, which, after innumerable difficulties, he at last raised at Coëln-on-the-Spree, in the centre of the re-united Marches; or rather, this castle itself is his monument.

Notwithstanding the eagerness to acquire and to accumulate, which was an equally marked feature in his character and conduct, he yet took care, as he said himself in his last will, not to leave ill-gotten gain to his heirs. It is impossible to read this document, which is likewise a confession of faith, and especially the statutes of the chivalric brotherhood founded by Frederic II, on the mountain near Old Brandenburg, without being touched by the gentle spirit of moral and religious purity which he fostered in his bosom. The immediate intention of the order may have been to unite in this elevated spirit the knightly bodies of

the Marches and the Franconian circles, which were still engaged in frequent quarrels.

And if we read a record of Albert Achilles,—the rules which he laid down for his wars in Pomerania,—we remark, that this prince combined, with that personal courage which has procured for him his surname, the spirit, not to say of a general, but of an able leader, endowed with military circumspection and tactical skill. Although he was for the most part engaged in a different scene of action, yet his memory is imperishable in the March. He recovered the feudal superiority over Pomerania, which had consequences of such immense importance. As he settled on the one hand the litigated boundaries of Ukermark, so he also kept Crossau and Züllichau against a power otherwise quite superior to his, that of Matthias Hunniades; and he fixed the limits of the Marches, as they remained afterwards, with the exception of a few subsequent acquisitions.

After him, the two branches of the family divided for more than a century.

The younger, to which the Franconian principalities belonged, richer in enterprising men than in treasures or territory, was principally engaged in the general affairs of the empire and the world, and was also successful in various acquisitions.

The elder, to whose lot the electoral dignity and the Marches had fallen, which now only became again a country by themselves, devoted itself especially to the domestic affairs of those provinces.

The Margrave Electors are neither in great successes nor in personal abilities to be compared with the founders of the power ; but they were honourable men, men of zeal and activity, who with untiring exertions gave themselves up to the urgent tasks which they met with.

We shall not here enter into the details of their lives : carried on and supported by the spirit of their country, they principally endeavoured to realize the great ideas which formed the basis of the social state of man,—those of law, religion, and civil government.

It may be asserted that the German law books, framed in the times of a feeble supreme power, accommodating themselves to particularities, are apt to foster the spirit of local independence and self-government. In the Roman law, on the contrary, which carries in itself the elements of an organized state, from which it has also risen, the general ideas are arranged in a scientific system. It presupposes a strong ruling power which deals justice to all.

It was of the greatest consequence that in the beginning of the sixteenth century, following the example of emperor and empire, the elector of Brandenburg, Joachim I, also exerted himself with all his might to get for the Roman, (or as it was called, the written imperial law, which he acknowledged as the only rule of right,) the preponderance over the common law of the land. In one of his edicts he rises to the style of a sovereign prince ; he decrees as the emperors used to do by virtue of the prerogative,

and by his superior discretion. This was not, however, the sole reason for which the University of Frankfort was founded. It was intended quite in a general way to give the nations an opportunity, as its charter expresses it, of acquiring the pearl of knowledge; yet its establishment had nevertheless for its especial object the study of law. The first chancellor was a doctor of laws of Bologna; the first ordinary professor of the faculty of law had, as well in Rome as at the Imperial Chamber, added practice to theoretical studies; and soon after we meet with a famous reader of law, whom his admiring pupils, crowding round him in the street, conduct from the lecture-room to his house. A new high court was established in which justice was to be dispensed according to Roman law: not as if all the privileges of persons and corporations had been done away with by it; it was already enough that the general principles of jurisprudence, as they were now laid down, paved the way for such a step. To this tribunal all the powerful noblemen submitted, who until now had resisted the civil and crown courts. The prince, to whose jurisdiction the whole community was subject, reserved to himself the right of hearing also the vassals of the liegés who had co-operated for its establishment, asserting that he could deny justice to no one. That feuds and violence were put an end to, was especially owing to the altered ideas of right, which would not favour, nor even permit them any more.

Then came to pass that great change in ecclesias-

tical affairs which is designated as the Reformation of the Church.

The March, like the provinces of later date in general, was very thickly interspersed with ecclesiastical property. If the computation that ten thousand ecclesiastics had lived in it, be not quite destitute of truth, it is evident of how great consequence it was to restore to the country and to civil society such a great number of natives and immigrants, who considered themselves, first of all, as members of a general body. Besides this, they wished no more to pay tribute to foreign sees, no more indulgences were to be sold, either towards the building of St. Peter's, at Rome, or, as it might happen, to pay the expenses of a war against the Russians as the enemies of Latin Christendom. The minds of men, here as well as elsewhere, had become weary of making religious feelings serve worldly purposes, and of the innumerable other abuses of the Church.

The prince ventured upon this innovation in the belief, that, as neither of the two supreme heads had undertaken the work, he himself was not only bound, but even justified to set about it, by his duty as God's vicegerent on earth. He held as strong ideas of the power of princes as his father did, yet he would have succeeded as little, had not the states sided with him.

In general, however strongly the Hohenzollern insisted on the prerogative, yet they carried their most important undertakings only by the consent of their states.

With their concurrence, that first general cessation of feuds of 1464 was proclaimed ; the assembled states obliged the town of Berlin to submit to the prince ; and when afterwards another opposition raised its head in the Old March, the majority of them constituted themselves into a court of law, and compelled the refractory to yield obedience.* It was the states who furnished the money for the purchase of the New March, and they supported with all their might the maintenance of the claims on Pomerania : with the consent of lords, knights, and commonalty, the court of the chamber was established. The most important of the different states influenced the resolution of Joachim II ; and when it was fixed, they all joined him ; by their advice the secularizations were begun, which indeed profited them also, but, above all, secured a broader basis for the princely power.

By this active co-operation in the public affairs, the states could not fail to acquire a great influence on them, and a large share of the executive power. As they granted the required taxes, "from loyalty and good-will, not from obligation," the management of the public money, as well in raising as in appropriating the revenue, was for the most part left to their care. At the deliberations about general business, Land-councillors, taken from the nobility, were joined to the Court-councillors chosen by the prince.

In this manner, that kind of balanced government

* Raumer Codex diplomaticus, ii. 201.

between prince and estates was introduced, which Protestantism in general called into existence. Under John George,—who is called the Economist, because of his having restored the decayed finances of the country,—prince and estates, nobles and towns, spiritual and temporal elements, were in perfect equilibrium. The land was better cultivated than ever, and enriched by a prosperous commerce. There could not yet be any question of general political importance, yet the prince, especially whilst united with his neighbour of Saxony, exercised a considerable influence upon the empire.* The Ascanian Margravate was not only restored, but also very greatly improved, and thoroughly organized. The Hohenzollern princes had succeeded in checking those Titanic powers which disturbed the public peace; in re-uniting and maintaining a territory curtailed on all sides; and in training the country, by the adoption of new and pregnant ideas, to participate in the general intellectual life of the world; and all this in co-operation with the states, who, for this very reason, combined with them in one great peaceful commonwealth.

But, if the Marches thus partook of that prosperous and flourishing condition, satisfactory on the whole, in which Protestant Germany was placed, it had like-

* *Malaspina avvertimenti al Pp. Sisto V, 1586. Il duca di Sassonia e Marchese di Brandenburg, saliti in tanta riputazione che erano assoluti arbitri della Germania nè facea S. M. cosa alcuna se da questi non fosse prima approvata.*

wise to fear the same dangers, arising from the progress of the restored Roman Catholic doctrine, which threatened to make everything retrograde.

To the champions of the latter, there was in the beginning of the seventeenth century no other house so obnoxious, nor indeed did any stand so much in their way, as that of Brandenburg. Not that it had possessed greater importance than others, or shewn particular hostility; far from it. The Hohenzollerns had until now always kept on good terms with the house of Habsburg, between which and itself there existed a friendship of old standing; and princes of moderate dispositions, like Maximilian II and Joachim II, are not very far apart from each other, in spite of differences of religion,—but only a short time before rights had accrued to the Brandenburg princes which must have mightily increased their authority, and made them one of the most powerful props of Protestantism.

The margraves of the Franconian branches (Anspach and Baireuth), as remarked before, had made some important acquisitions, and meditated others, during all the time that the electors were engaged within their own country. In Silesia they had purchased Jaegerndorf, and some adjoining possessions, chiefly valuable for the influence which they gave over a province still considered as almost independent and self-governed. It was of by far greater importance that a member of this house, the margrave Albert the elder, had found an opportunity, and urgent reasons,

to change the territory of that military order in Prussia into a duchy, though only after he had lost the greater part of its possessions. He did so under the protection of his near relation the Jaghellon king of Poland,—who would, without doubt, otherwise have seized also upon the remaining half,—and with the consent of the estates. Both of those countries were much akin to the Marches in their origin, their degree of civilization, and religion. Besides this, the son of Albert, by his marriage with Maria Eleonora of Cleves, who had a claim of succession resting on special imperial grants, had gained for his descendants and for his house a very valid right to that duchy.

It happened in the beginning of the seventeenth century that the different branches of the Franconian margraves became extinct soon after each other, and all their possessions and claims fell into the electoral family.

This was a combination, by which a number of German provinces might have been united under one sceptre,—Franconia, Prussia, the Marches, Cleves, and Juliers, and one of the Silesian principalities,—an extent of territory such as had never been possessed in Germany by one master since the days of Henry the Lion, whose position, however, partook of quite a different character.

Whether it was that Joachim Frederic feared the envy which the amalgamation of all these countries could not fail to excite against him, or that he was wanting in the political courage to enter upon such a

comprehensive undertaking, but he shrank from the idea of aggregating and maintaining them under one rule. He preferred to satisfy the claims put forth by his half-brothers with the Franconian principalities. The only aim of his ambition was that his eldest son should unite the eastern and the western countries, Cleves and Prussia, with the Marches.

It was, however, in vain to hope that by these means this envy would be abated. Austria could not be pleased with the formation of a German power, which, even in this reduced state, approached the extent of its own much nearer than did any other. But that this power was a Protestant one, offering a new stronghold to the hitherto fluctuating body of the Evangelicals in the empires, excited all the attention and apprehensions of the progressing Roman Catholic restoration.

The then vice-chancellor of the empire urged the emperor to make a point of resisting this acquisition of Juliers and Cleves. Not that there were any legal objections to it,—this he was far from asserting,—but because the power of the dissidents from the Roman Catholic faith would have been infinitely increased by it, all their hope being already centered in the house of Brandenburg. Not to allow any independent or obnoxious government to take root in those western countries, had ever been one of the first principles of the Spanish Austrian policy, to which it also now adhered. And in consequence open war had very nearly broken out on the Lower Rhine.

Whilst in this manner the imperial court, departing from its former moderate policy in the administration of the empire, allowed itself to be so carried away by religious party interests as to oppose claims of succession, the legal validity of which were beyond a doubt, friendship was no more to be thought of. Brandenburg was obliged to abandon its provincial position, by which, in accordance with Lutheran opinions, it was bound to peace. It joined the league of German princes who were resolved to oppose the Romanizing tendency which began to prevail in the management of the affairs of the empire. John Sigismund, Joachim Frederic's eldest son, (who besides found in the Lutheran doctrine and ritual too great an approach to Popery), did not scruple to join the more uncompromising system of Calvinism, the professors of which were at that time principally carrying on the war. He surrounded himself henceforward only with men of this persuasion. His privy council consisted in the year 1615 almost exclusively of zealous Calvinists.

In the meanwhile that general war broke out, to which we have before alluded. It was kindled by the dissensions in the hereditary dominions of Austria, where a Calvinist prince had likewise encroached upon an acknowledged right of succession, and the usage hitherto recognized among German princes: then its flames spread over Germany, first, over those who had had a share in the Bohemian disturbances; next, over their allies and friends; afterwards, over those who stood up to prevent the latter from being

entirely ruined, although they had not taken the least part in the Bohemian troubles. From Upper Germany they burst upon Lower Germany; Romanism, consistent in itself and victorious, followed up its intention of restoring the ancient forms of the Church and the hierarchy of the empire to its former state, and to raise them into exclusive dominion.

If we inquire into the causes of this sudden ruin of the Protestants, we find the principal one to have been the narrow-mindedness of their views, and their blindness to the common danger.

The institution of estates, which had been everywhere introduced, was based on the pre-supposition of an imperial power dispensing equal protection and justice to all. People did not, if we may say so, dare to believe, that imperial government could adopt another character, and pursue a different course.

The estates of Würtemberg ceased to concede those taxes which would have provided for the defence of the frontier, at the very time when the victorious enemy approached them. Now and then, a deliberation which never came to anything still discussed the plan of some works of defence, when the foe was already invading the country. Or they had contrived to manage the defence in such a way, that only quite a limited superintendence of it remained in the hands of the prince. How different the absolutism of the Roman Catholic princes, who had learned to govern from popes and Italian rulers, when one will was

paramount in every country,* and for a long time all were united in one great conviction of a common aim!

In this ruin Brandenburg also was involved, and that from the same reasons.

The combination of the different countries was far from effecting an increase of power. Each of them had more than enough to do with its own affairs; but in the most important and influential of all, the electoral Marches of Brandenburg, the change of religion, and of the political system, had given rise to an uneasy state of things which paralysed all its energies. The defeat of the Bohemian king, which was the commencement of the general ruin, was even hailed as a welcome event in the Marches. But when the war approached the frontiers of the country, the states deemed it sufficient to occupy the fortresses, whither they had carried their best property for safety. Nor did they at the very outset grant for purposes of this importance more than three thousand, and, as their zeal decreased, only nine hundred men. However, so they stated, it was enough to remain the humble and devoted servants of the emperor. As to the general state of the world, and the struggle of the great spiritual and political powers, in their provincial narrow-mindedness, they had not a conception of it.† The

* Maximilian of Bavaria governed for thirty-nine years without convoking the estates.—Rudhart, *History of the Estates of Bavaria*, ii, 270.

† Correspondence of the elector George William with David Von Lüderitz.—König, *Historical Description of Berlin*, i, 326.

consequence was, that the regiments of Wallenstein, unmindful of the alleged neutrality, overran the towns and districts of the Marches, and appropriated to themselves as a booty those pecuniary means which had not been employed against them. Now the comprehensive designs of the victorious power became evident to the most dim-sighted.

An imperial general was invested with one of the most important principalities of the empire. This was placing in jeopardy the independence of hereditary princely right, the principle on which most of what had taken place in Germany had depended. What had happened to one, might soon befall the rest.

If we remember, how much the sequestration of the ecclesiastical property had contributed to the establishment of the territorial power, we may easily understand, of what consequence it was that the imperial government ordered the restitution of those estates to the Church.

From the recovered revenues, a great university was to be founded in the north of Germany, under the superintendence of the Jesuits, with the purpose besides of extirpating those doctrines which formed the groundwork of the actual state of affairs.*

* The list of the abbeys, priories, and convents, which had been restored by the commissioners in the circles of Upper and Lower Saxony (Mailath, *History of Austria*, iii, 168), enumerates upwards of one hundred and twenty of them, without mentioning the bishoprics and archbishoprics. These commissioners proposed the foundation of a university, at Goslar, Hameln, or Nordhausen, in about the same districts in which Halle and Göttingen are situated.—*Ib.* 474.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the Marches, representatives of the new state of things in the empire appeared,—the imperial general in Mecklenburg, and, in the archbishopric of Magdeburg, which had until now been appended to the Marches, as occupant of the see, an Austrian prince. But by this time the monasteries and chapters in Brandenburg were likewise reclaimed, and not they alone, but also the revenues derived from them for half a century. The duchy of Prussia was considered as belonging to this category: it was openly said, that it was ecclesiastical property, and ought to be restored.

To oppose such designs with energy and success was a task beyond the strength of the government of Brandenburg. At a time when the most powerful incentive to men lay in their creed, the greater part of the Privy Council was Calvinist, the generality of the States Lutheran, the first minister a Roman Catholic. Any movement which prevailed in the political world found an advocate in some one or other of these, and carried along with it the prince, (who was not without intellect, but no warrior, and conscious of,* and grieved at his own weakness), keeping its hold on him so long as it excited his hopes, until the time came when these were changed into apprehensions. All the rest of Protestant Germany was as unable to check a course of events like this.

And nobody ought to believe that by such means

* The *Relatione di Germania*, 1628, speaks of him as, “di bell’ aspetto, di buon ingegno, ma non troppo vivace ni belligero.”

the empire could have been restored to its ancient order and freedom. Germany could only rest safely in the mutual acknowledgment of its different elements. But in this manner the real progress of the nation, and all the dearly-bought fruits of its civilization, would have been blighted. The power would have fallen into the hands of a prince who was persuaded that the surest plan that he could adopt for his conscience would be in all points to obey his confessor. Everything would have at last become the prey of the clergy and of the soldiery.

A state of affairs already shewed itself in which the great Roman Catholic states of the empire (for they also could not abandon this principle of territorial power,) got into commotion. The pope was alarmed for his see at Rome, and called on the old jealousy of the French court against Austria for help. In the meantime, the northern Protestants had every day to apprehend being reached by the onslaught of the war of conversion.

A great political conviction was gained in the general conflict of the powers which formed the European world.

As soon as the continuance of the system of territorial principalities and of Protestantism became doubtful, people began to feel, that, after all, it was indispensable for the due balance of power in Europe, or the independent progress in civilization of the other nations and governments. The general concatenation

of affairs required an independant Protestant principality, especially in the German North.

But it must be allowed, that we German Protestants were not at that time in a condition to help ourselves, and to regain our former standing.

It must have been a foreign prince, who, taking up arms, at once in the interest of his own country and of religion, would break the military power which was on the point of crushing the evangelical principalities.

But what a dangerous necessity was it, to be in want of such a help! The deliverance gained, for the power which effected it, a superiority which now first brought the fortunes of Germany to a decisive crisis. Every thing went on smoothly enough as long as the judicious and well-meaning king was yet alive, who had first conceived the idea of that undertaking, and afterwards carried it into execution. But, on his death, only the barefaced Swedish cupidity remained, represented by violent leaders, who merely kept fighting for their own ends, and by an able diplomatist, who involved the whole of Europe in the struggle, in order to promote his own views.

Scarcely escaped from the ruin which their lawful master the emperor had designed for them, the evangelical states saw themselves condemned to a different sort of servitude by the superior power of those allies who had come to help them.

While some of them joined the emperor again, who, made wiser by misfortune, tried to return to his former moderation, they incurred the wrath of their more

warlike religious brethren, against whom they were not able to make head, even with such powerful help.

Just in those times of utter weakness, the circumstance happened, in anticipation of which, the Brandenburg princes had gained rights for centuries—the vassalage of the duchy of Pomerania. But now, the Swedes, who already were in occupation, claimed the permanent possession of a country so conveniently situated for them. In vain did the elector ally himself with the emperor to wrest it from their grasp, and to assert the rights of the empire over it, which were also his own.

Instead of conquering a new province, all that he gained was that the most important of the old ones became the theatre of a most savage war, which, of all the European countries, has visited none more heavily than the March of Brandenburg, now almost changed into a wilderness.

In the midst of the general decay, and of his own little without any resource or hope, George William died, and his only son, a young man of twenty years of age, succeeded him.

THE NEW PRINCE GEORGE WILLIAM.

Nature has sometimes this advantage, that it fills up men. The circumstance that the new prince was obliged in his childhood to seek refuge from the ravings bands of soldiers at one time in the forests of Brandenburg, and at another behind the walls of Chemnitz, could perhaps give a more healthy develop-

ment to his personal character, than if he had been reared in the quiet luxury, the indulgent and ill-digested education of a court. Afterwards, he had been brought to the Netherlands, to the free nurseries of liberal learning, to the friendly house of Orange. He was already matured enough not to forget in an hour of temptation the good principles with which he had once been imbued; but of all the fruits of his experience, the most important, yet, at the same time, the most simple, was his becoming acquainted with a country, which, although involved in the general wars, nevertheless, enjoyed unparalleled prosperity at home. The republic was then in the height of its glory and greatness.

But when he came home to the country of his inheritance, he found it dismembered, with all its resources blasted by the devastations of the war, exposed every moment to the violence of the belligerent powers, and destitute of any consistent policy.

“On the one side,” he says, in a memoir still extant, which dates from the first year of his reign, “I have the crown of Sweden, on the other, the emperor. I am placed between them, and am waiting to see what they are going to do with me; whether they will leave me my own, or whether they will take it from me.”* Whilst reading the biblical histories, the only ones

* “Consideration, whether I shall take a part now or hereafter.” Original document in the Royal Cabinet records at Berlin; the oldest and most remarkable of all those which I have made use of for this work.

which at that time made any deep impression upon men's minds, he almost thinks that there had never been a prince in such straits as he, and that neither David nor Solomon had ever had such difficulties to find their way through.

He had a certain feeling, that he ought not to separate from the emperor on slight grounds. But to expect anything like substantial help from the latter would have been wilful self-deceit. He had a perfectly clear knowledge of his own position; and, as he once exclaimed, of what use could princes be to the emperor, who had allowed themselves to be driven away from their country and their people?

But, first of all, he must try to make himself master in the March, where the minister of his father, Count Schwartzenberg, ruled with almost independent sway, intending to continue the old policy in conjunction with the leaders of the army, which had besides been levied under imperial authority. We cannot read without astonishment and sympathy, how Frederic William broke his fetters, got those leaders, who also held the command of the fortresses, into his power, and rid himself of them. We are reminded of the bold and successful stratagems of Italian partisan chiefs,—with this exception only, that talent was here employed in a good cause. The fortresses built by his forefathers, and the old inheritance of his family, the prince was obliged to recover by a combination of cunning and force. Against the minister neither an intrigue, nor—as it was for a long time supposed—

violence, was necessary. His end may perhaps also be considered as remarkable in a psychological point of view. Schwartzenberg was in a state of irritation, neither ill nor well, when one day the captains of a regiment which had taken the oath of fidelity to the emperor urgently demanded from him the arrears of their pay, so that he was obliged to make them a payment on account from his own purse ; and immediately afterwards he learned from an indirect channel, yet with the greatest certainty, that he had incurred the displeasure of his new prince.* We cannot say that he was conscious of guilt, but he could not but know what heavy misdemeanours he was charged with by his sovereign. At this very moment he was seized with a shivering fit, which in a few days brought on his death. The two parties which he had striven to keep together were for ever torn asunder ; he felt attacked on both sides by their hostility ; the fall of the policy which he had followed put an end to his existence.

No longer so closely bound to the emperor, Frederic William might venture to approach the Swedes one step nearer. It cost him indeed a difficult and tedious negociation ; but yet he got them at last to evacuate those places in the Marches which they still occupied. The Hessians also withdrew from the western part of Cleves, and he could again breathe more freely. Now

* The elector was convinced to the end of his days, that the count had entertained thoughts of attempting his life. He mentioned it to the English ambassador as late as 1683.

it was possible for him to take a step of vital importance,—although his authority to do so was all but contested,—he levied a small armed force, which, in the midst of the armies moving around him, gave him a certain security, and an independent position. He needed it for the negotiations of peace which had in the meanwhile been commenced, but at every stage been interrupted by feats of arms, and again best promoted by the dangers of war.

It was now quite out of the question to hinder any longer those acquisitions, the mere thought of which had once caused such commotion in the enemy's camp. In the year 1647 Frederic William concluded a treaty with the Palatine of Neuburg, by which, after much hesitation, he acknowledged the principles laid down for the settlement of the disputed succession of Cleves, but at the same time got rid of some difficulties in the former agreements, and secured to himself the possession of two counties, one of which, the March, might be considered as the most important in the empire, and also of the ancient duchy of Cleves on the western frontiers of Germany.* The two princes agreed to apply to the emperor for his ratification of their treaty, but still to adhere to it, even in case of his refusal, and to make common cause against every

* Düsseldorf, April 8, 1647. Dumont, vi, 1, 392, cf. Helwing, History of the Brandenburg States, iii, 425. A compromise of 1649 completed the treaty with regard to Ravensberg. The settlement of September 9, 1666, changed, on this basis especially, the provisional condition into a permanent one.

aggressor, for the maintenance of the whole possession. It was no trifling advantage, that in the act of peace signed at Osnaburg this arrangement was tacitly acknowledged; that at least the manifold other claims were not explicitly enumerated.

And where now were the times when the order of the Teutonic knights might have hoped to recover the duchy of Prussia?

As little could the territory of the March of Brandenburg itself be attacked. There were quite different things then at stake for the German hierarchy than the recovery of the sequestrated abbeys and chapters.

Of the former possessions of the family one only was wanting still,—the duchy of Jaegerndorf,—which the emperor had confiscated, and given away again; concerning which a particular discussion arose with the latter. In the general negotiations, another country became the subject of debate—the duchy of Pomerania, the cession of which was of equal importance to the empire and to Brandenburg.

At last, emperor and empire, acknowledging the right of the house of Brandenburg, declared that it was after all impossible for them to uphold Frederic William in it.

The latter answered, that Pomerania was a country which God had given to his forefathers, and to himself; that he would rather wish quietly to keep it;*

* In a consultation, May 2, 1647, he says among other things, that the States of Brandenburg were bound to support him in his enterprise against Pomerania, since they had advised the peace of Prague.

he did not wish to sell it; but, should he lose the whole or part of it, an indemnification must be found for him, with which he could be satisfied.

He met, however, with immense difficulties. He complains, indeed, that precisely those of his neighbours, who had been most zealous for the cession, were the strongest opponents to his indemnification. But he was already too powerful for them to run the risk of driving him over to join the French or the Swedes.* They at last resolved upon a step which made an era in the history of the empire, to secularize in his favour the sees of Halberstadt, Minden, and Magdeburg, as the price of the relinquishment of Upper Pomerania; for the rest of the province, with Camin, was left to him.

In after times this indemnification appeared to many great and beyond proportion; but this was not the opinion of contemporaries,† and least of all is it to be believed that Frederic William himself was satisfied with it. Of all the princes of the house of Brandenburg he is the only one who ever took a serious interest in navigation, and had a longing for maritime power. How often in his youth did he indulge in dreams of sailing to Prussia from Austria through the mouths of the Oder, along nothing but

* "Ne Galli affectum Brandenburgi eorum lucrarentur soli." Adami relatio de pace Osnabr. p. 458.

† Contarini, *Relatione della pace di Munster*, finds it to be a "ricompensa di maggior entrata se bene non di tanta conseguenza, quanto quella della Pomerania ceduta stanti i riguardi del Baltico."

coasts which were subject to his power! His sojourn in the Netherlands, though it had not called forth this predilection, had yet increased it. How reluctant he felt to consent to the cession, may be seen from the fact that he soon afterwards offered to the crown of Sweden, for the restitution of Pomerania, not only the three bishoprics, but two million dollars besides.

As we now view the matter, it might be considered a lucky circumstance that his wish was not complied with. Brandenburg formed by this means a connexion with Middle and Inland Germany, the advantages of which were more than equivalent for that maritime position.

And thus the house of Brandenburg, without having made one conquest, issued from the war with possessions by far more extensive than those with which it had entered into it.

Yet the mere acquisition of a number of provinces exhibited no features which might have been of consequence for the developement of Germany, or of Europe. It remained to be shewn whether the prince, who had succeeded in asserting his own rights, would now follow up that policy which the general state of affairs required from him.

He was most effectually aided by the recognition of the territorial sovereignties in connexion with the Protestant Church government, as it was settled in the peace. Without doubt it was first of all requisite to be strong enough to maintain this new state of things.

Experience had shewn what might result to Germany from the want of strongly-organized communities, able to make opposition by their own might. If there must have been two opposite religious principles in the empire they ought to have balanced each other, so that one or the other side should not always be obliged to apply for foreign help against every danger which chanced to threaten.

Formerly the experiment had been made of confederacies; but they had always been broken up, or had split upon the rock of internal discord. What an advantage for German Protestantism, that now a power arose, which was able to defend itself by its own strength, and to take up arms against foreign intrusion!

But this was not all that was wanted. It might be even said that Sweden would always protect the religious principle. But was this then the truly German view of Protestantism, which had never been false to the emperor and the empire? Was not a highly injurious influence on the most intimate affairs of the German commonwealth thereby allowed to a policy which was foreign from its very nature? Considerable cessions, extorted by insupportable outrages, had been made during the war to the two powers which had been introduced by it into the empire: ought one not then to have thought of recovering what had been lost? The dignity of the German name must be upheld, or rather, called forth into life against them. Thus the interest of the territorial

principalities and of religion was mixed up with the general one of all Germany, by which the selfish exclusiveness of the former was mitigated. The constitution of the German empire, as it had then been modified, admitted of an independent developement of either interest ; it was only requisite to enter the lists with one's own resources.

To effect this, it was first of all necessary for Brandenburg, that its united parts should no more depend upon foreign powers, which was eminently the case as long as the duchy of Prussia was but a province of Poland.

When in the year 1654, the Swedes, not yet daunted by great reverses, resumed, and indeed at first with irresistible success, the war against the crown of Poland, which had been only interrupted, Frederic William, with respect to the latter country, got into a position similar to that in which he had been ten years before in Germany.

It would lead us on too far, if we tried here to set forth the policy which he followed up at each turn of these vicissitudes : how he thought at first, that he was able to remain neuter, then felt obliged even to make common cause with the Swedes, then gave up these allies again, and entered into a treaty with the king of Poland. The most important results were, that in these struggles he formed an army, which by its great achievements, raised the reputation of Brandenburg after so long a decay of its old military glory ; and that he freed himself from that galling

chancellor could refuse to set the seal on the decrees of the duke; the superior councillors managed the administration of his household and his demesnes; the diet (the members of which were furnished with instructions by their districts) decided all affairs of importance. One might safely say, that Prussia was not less of a republic than Poland, with this difference only, that the latter crown itself was allowed the greatest influence on its affairs. The king of Poland arrogated to himself the right of setting aside decrees which were obnoxious to him. If the prince hesitated, the king commanded; he would fix a term within which the former had to fill up vacant offices according to the proposals made to him.

It would not be a just view of the conduct of the elector to consider it as an attack on that constitution; either condemning it, as an infringement upon well-earned rights, or defending it, under the plea that the commonwealth could not otherwise have prospered. The true state of the case is this: that old constitution had already lost its real existence. It was based upon the co-operation of the king of Poland, which had been abolished by the treaty of Welau and the oath of Bromberg. The question rather was to build up a new constitution upon the ruins of the old one.

And then the states tried to make up for the support which they had lost in the king, by new conditions which they wanted to impose upon the elector. Almost like the Argonese and the Hungarians after

the arrest of Andrew their king, they were of opinion that he should govern merely so long as he kept to these conditions, but not otherwise. They demanded that at the opening of every diet, the administration should be inquired into; if it had been found that their privileges had been violated, they wished to be relieved from their oath.

Frederic William had no notion of this sort of government. He proposed to the states a constitution in which he granted them very important rights,—amongst others the control over the levy and expenditure of the taxes; yet he* also insisted on retaining the power of doing what belonged to an illustrious and rightful sovereign.† He wished once for all to settle the forms of government.

This gave rise to the most violent opposition. The states tried to renew the old connexion with the court of Poland, and it seems almost as if in that quarter there had been a certain desire for such an approximation. Bailiff Rhode, who had at Königsberg ex-

* “And it is well known, that they presumed to assert things against my ancestors, which were not warranted by their liberties; the reason, why I want to have everything clearly defined, is this, because I should wish not to leave any difficulties for my children.” If he left children under age, they would refuse to swear allegiance to them.—Letter to Schwerin, Feb. 27.

† The most popular compendium of politics at that time was Seckendorf's *Princely State*, in which it is indeed declared to be the duty of the prince, to treat his subjects as freeborn people, to hear his estates, and to observe the compacts and agreements concluded with them; but the authority of the sovereign already appears as paramount.—II, paragr. 1, first edition of the book, 1656.

exercised all the power of a popular leader, whose will no one ventured to withstand, proposed an alliance for the restoration of that prosperous condition which had been the lot of Prussia while under Polish protection, and got the gracious assurance of the king's favour.* Electoral troops occupied the high roads, to interrupt the communication between Königsberg and Warsaw; the town, on the other hand, mounted its cannon on the walls. When the elector resolved upon going in person to the scenes of these troubles, his family felt rather uncomfortable. We see from their letters that they commend him to God and his good angels, that no harm might befall him.† He also met with the most obstinate resistance, and it was only by resolutely seizing the right moment that he succeeded in getting hold of the bailiff: he had, indeed, been told, that if they had a hundred grievances, and he redressed ninety-nine of them, they would refuse him their allegiance on account of the hundredth. "I do nothing here," he once exclaimed, "but wear myself out with inward struggles; may God preserve me for the people who will not listen to reason."‡

But by degrees reason made itself heard. The states had gone too far. They strove not so much against their princes as against an historical fact which

* Documents in Bacsko, *History of Prussia*, v, 682.

† Letter of the Landgravine Hedwig Sophia, d. d. Sep. 10, 1662. Orlich, *Frederic William*, 1836. Append. p. 93.

‡ Letters of the Stadtholder.—Orlich, *History of Prussia in the Seventeenth Century*, 1838, i, p. 329, etc.

had once been accomplished in the conflict of European interests, and which they had not the least power to revoke. At last, they nevertheless decided upon settling the most important questions without any further reference to Poland. A compromise was made in which the rights of the prince and those of the states were in some sort balanced: Frederic William found them even more favourable to his claims than his own original scheme had been.* On the 16th of October, 1663, the states paid homage to him as their only lord paramount and sovereign.

This was a day of immense importance for Brandenburg, and the affairs of Germany in general. The treaties which had been concluded became now only a reality. The Polish influence was put an end to; it was the direct retaliation for the losses made to Poland in the sixteenth century.

Yet, with all this, the Prussian state was not yet founded. A mere annexation of the different provinces, even though the princely power had some life in it, could not have built it up. The motive which led to the formation of a new political organization belonged to a standard which was above the reach and capacity of provincial minds, based as it was on that axiom of policy, that even power ought to have weight by itself, and to depend on its own intrinsic resources.

* 16th May, to Schwerin: "The states would have got more by the constitution (proposed by him) than they now get in the recess of the diet. I thank the Most High, that it has thus come to pass, He may assist me hereafter."

We have seen how necessary this was for religion and the state, for the German empire and the general system of Europe; yet the prince alone, indeed, saw clearly into the matter, as the cause of Germany appeared to him as his own.

Every thing was to give way to military considerations. Placed between powers which vied with each other on all sides in their preparations for war, Brandenburg also was obliged to arm. Judicious contemporaries commend what they call the heroic enterprise of the elector in establishing a standing army as the only means of protecting the German empire from the formidable power of its neighbours. It was a deed, not of choice or of ambition, but of necessity. The only thing was, how to find the means of raising and maintaining such an army without exhausting the country.*

To obtain this from the free consent of the different states, was an idea which could not yet be understood in those times, and would have been quite impracticable, owing to the prevalence of provincial feelings. All that, therefore, could be done at first, was to induce the most important, and even the most loyal of these diets, to make an adequate grant.

Let us examine more closely this attempt on which so much depended.

We must acknowledge, with regard to the states of the March, that they had, until now, supported their prince to the best of their power, especially in the re-

* Edict of October 14, 1661.

demption of the mortgaged domains; but a demand like this, made just at a moment when they had hoped to enjoy the fruits of the peace concluded in the year 1661, cut them to the very heart. They appealed to the example of Swedish Pomerania, when the foreign power to which the country had been given up, was, nevertheless, lightening the heavy burthen. They called upon the prince to disband his military force, to dismiss all the regiments, even the staffs and skeletons, not to think of any further increase of artillery, and to reduce the troops which might be requisite for garrisoning the fortresses of the companies as before.

Frederic William replied, that having once trusted to the power of arms for the maintenance of his country and of his government, he would and must keep in readiness for war, since danger was threatening on all sides; that, without safety, there was no hope of prosperity to the country.

The determined will of the prince, his displeasure, —which they afterwards accused themselves of having deserved, by the objectionable language of their memorial,—the remembrance of the duty which was imposed upon them by the reverses of the imperial diet, induced the states to grant the sum to which he had at last confined himself, 20,000 dollars annually; and at once to levy it in the usual form of a contribution.

Trifling as this sum may appear, it was for that time a very oppressive one, and doubly so by the manner in which it was raised from the whole country.

It is exceedingly painful to read, in a table dating from the seventeenth century, the number of houses which the towns of the Marches had contained in the good olden times, compared with that which still remained after the troubles of the thirty years war. In many of them, half; in others, two-thirds; in some, even five-sixths of the houses had been destroyed. Berlin had no more suburbs, and, within the walls, at least one-fourth of the houses less. It numbered only three hundred citizens.

And these towns had now to defray the contribution which was laid on real property, especially on houses. The tax was not only oppressive, but it also prevented every improvement. Who would settle where there was not yet any trade, with the certainty staring in his face that he would have to pay a tax of this description? The execution waggon was seen incessantly driving through the streets, laden with goods which had been seized for arrears of taxes.

When the delegates of the diet reassembled in January 1667, it came to light that the country would fall to ruin unless a stop was put to this evil. The elector states over and over again with what grievous lamentations he was daily and hourly worried.* "But," continues he, "as to abating anything of his

* The people of Frankfort, *e. g.* complain of their having to pay a monthly contribution of 1150 dollars; many were rated at twenty or thirty dollars; people could not leave to their children anything but dilapidated, mortgaged houses, and an immense number of receipts for taxes paid.

demand, that was out of the question. It was lucky enough if he were not obliged to require more." He saw no other expedient, but to try another tax.

He had announced this already several times, and after the example of the United Provinces, proposed an excise. There had also been more than one attempt made to establish that system, yet only on a very limited scale, and to a small use, and therefore to little purpose. But now the prince renewed the project in the most earnest manner. It was his opinion that real property should be relieved of the intolerable assessment; and every inhabitant, whether he were a house-owner or not, should pay for the protection which he enjoyed, by taking his share of the general burthen,

Nor did he, however, succeed this time in carrying his point with the nobility.

To the first excuse of the delegates, that they could not deliberate on a matter concerning which they were not instructed, as no mention of it had been made in the writs of summons, he replied by ordering them to return to their constituents, and to get the required instructions.* But the deliberations which upon this took place in the several districts led also this time to no favourable result. Prelates, counts,

* February 6, 1667, to the states of the Old March and Priegnitz, of the Middle Ukermark and Ruppín, and the knights and towns of the New March. The towns of the Old March and Priegnitz sided with the nobles.

and knights, from the country on both sides of the Oder and the Elbe, got in the meetings only more confirmed in their dislike to the innovation. The delegates on their return brought with them a declaration; that the general introduction of such a tax did not seem advisable to the nobles, as they would then of all their privileges retain nothing but the mere name.* They pleaded their merits towards the prince and his power: the elector, they said, would not like to make an order, which had given him so many illustrious ministers and brave generals, equal to burghers and peasants. The glory of his reign consisted precisely in his having known how to respect ancient rights.

The towns, on the other hand, the majority of which had ever sided with the elector, were now altogether in favour of his project. Where the magistrates refused, the guilds and companies declared for it, sometimes not without tumultuous demonstrations, and at last carried the former with them. The delegates of the towns spoke of the intention of the prince as of divine inspiration; they implored of him, as the dearly beloved father of their country, to listen to so many thousand souls sighing for relief in towns and

* *In toga et sago.* They pretended that the knights did not enjoy such exemptions, as it might appear; they were obliged to grant remissions to the peasants, otherwise these latter would not remain on their farms; they were scarcely able to maintain themselves, and to rear their children in noble virtues and liberal arts.—March 24, 1667.

villages, and everywhere to substitute the excise for the contribution.*

This was one of the most important moments for the general constitution of the country. It would be unjust to reproach the elector on account of his projects, such as they were, with having threatened to lower the authority of the states as such. His measures were suggested by the example of a republic, the United Provinces, where likewise the pay of a numerous standing army was defrayed by the proceeds of an excise. If the knights, yielding to necessity, had consented to the alteration of the tax, they would have gained great influence over its administration, and kept the granting of it for the future in their own hands. The institution of states had a chance of rising from a merely local power, into one which had its influence in the management of general affairs.

The power of the elector was by no means great enough for him to venture to impose, as the towns wished him to do, a tax on town and country without the consent of the knights. It appeared even for awhile as if he wanted to give it up altogether, and an edict was already framed, according to which the welfare of the towns was to be consulted by a fairer

* Memorials of March 23 and 24, 1667. "Christians ought, disregarding strict rights, to assist their agonizing fellow-christians. The tax was in accordance as well with the word of God, as with the laws of nature, which direct us to bear a common burden in common, and with the help of all." The guilds, however, declared, that they would break the necks of the collectors.

distribution of the direct taxes: whereupon discontent and heart-burnings broke out in the country, as if the prince had been prejudiced against the common good. But at that moment Frederic William was already determined: he followed the only way which the law of the land left open to him, and granted to the towns alone the institution of the tax which they demanded.

This was rendered possible, chiefly by the circumstance that the knights and the towns had long formed two quite distinct bodies for the purposes of taxation, each having a fixed assessment, which was considered as the basis of the whole constitution. The opposition which the knights did not fail to raise, thereby lost its force. Neither of the two bodies had the right to meddle with the manner in which the other chose to fulfil its obligations.

In April 1667, the towns had the choice given them either of adopting an excise, or of maintaining the existing mode of taxation: the government, however, reserving to itself the right of making up for any deficit in the amount of the general contribution, by raising in a different form the sum which was wanting. The first timid attempt was made at Berlin, and the result surpassed all expectation. In the autumn of the same year, the burgomaster, council, and burghers of the capital, declared that it had already been possible to relieve many of the poorer rate-payers; and by their exertions the new taxation was still further extended and consolidated. The

example of the capital was followed, first, by Frankfurt on the Oder, Prentzlau, and Brandenburg; and afterwards by all the rest.

And never did tax prove better adapted to circumstances, or more beneficial.

People could venture again to build new houses, as they were no more obliged to pay the ruinous rate. Already in the year 1671, a learned burgomaster of Berlin states, that within the last two years, more than a hundred and fifty houses had been restored, and many others built in that town.* In later edicts the elector boasts how much this had been the case everywhere. After a few years, the towns were in a quite different and more prosperous condition, which gave new hopes for the future. The sum assessed for the maintenance of the troops was not only raised, but even exceeded.

This successful result led to the more easy introduction of the new mode of taxation into other provinces. If we call to mind the former oppressive system, we can understand how the substitution of an excise was felt to be a relief. From the neighbouring districts, which were not so ready to venture upon

* Michael Zarlang: "*Profligatus fuit ille hactenus observatus modus collectandi secundum ædium et mansionum annuum tributum, —unde comsumptibilium vulgo accise [excise] modus magno civium commodo introductus est. Inde hoc biennio præterito et quod excurrit supra 150 ædificia ex ruinis reparata partim, pars etiam non contemnenda de novo exstructa.*" Very valuable records concerning this matter were deposited in the ball on the steeple of St. Nicolai church. See Küster, *Old and New Berlin*, i, 275-292.

the innovation, the inhabitants emigrated freely, and in great numbers, unto Brandenburg.

From this arose a complete change in the constitution. In the diet of the year 1683, the rights of the states were mooted once more. What is very remarkable, they did not then insist on the right of voting the supplies, but only on that of being consulted, if new taxes were to be imposed.* The government was far from disputing the latter privilege; that it had been more than once disregarded of late, was excused on the plea of urgent necessity, to which sometimes recesses and rights must give way. But another difficulty lay in the constituent elements of the diet itself. The towns also had been summoned to it, and their delegates had attended. Now their interests were already diametrically opposed to that of the knights. They demanded for instance, first of all, the execution of the elector's edicts, by which brewing and distilling were to be abolished in the country, and public houses to be removed into the towns. This was very much against the interests of the knights, who had until now supplied not only villages, but also

* In the memorial, dated May 29, 1683 (MS. of the Royal Library, Berlin) they refer to the repeated assurances laid down, *per recessus et pacta conventa*, as fundamental laws between head and members, "that no extraordinary taxes ought to be imposed, unless the states had been previously consulted, whether they were meet or not";—they say, that in this manner they were, as it were, stripped of their character as estates, and pray, "that they might not be deprived of their *votum consultativum* with regard to imposing new and extraordinary taxes."

many towns, with liquor. Before anything whatever had been done towards the settlement of this and other disputed points (for several more were brought into discussion), the delegates of the knights went home, without having even given warning of their intention to those of the towns. When such a split had taken place, how could a deliberation of the assembled states have been possible !

We shall blame no one for what happened.

The knights ought indeed to have resolved upon granting what was absolutely required ; but they may be excused on the consideration that they were unable to comprehend the wants of the state, since these arose more from the foreign relations of the prince than from the domestic concerns of their own provinces.

But it now necessarily followed also, that the nobility only retained importance within their own immediate districts, and that their privileges only affected their own particular interests. The contributions of the country were fixed in the year 1686, as in general they have remained ever since, except that from time to time, especially under the government which succeeded, some fresh taxes were granted. The knights were by no means without power ; but it was confined within very strict limits, and they had lost their former legitimate influence upon the general administration of public affairs.

Nor could the towns make any claim to this. That change of taxation they had not wrested from the

knights in constitutional discussions: they owed it to the will of the prince, who had also to pave the way for its successful consummation. His determination had settled the affair; his power had carried it through. For its execution and management he employed his own functionaries, who everywhere acted with a great stretch of authority, and he would not allow them to be disobeyed.

The prince, on the other hand, got the exclusive possession of the general government. Who could have scanned his wants, or have brought him to account?

Not that he had been absolute: his power was limited with regard to a large proportion of his vassals and subjects, though in a great part of his dominions it was left free, checked only by the country's power of production, which it was incumbent upon him to increase to the utmost.

Thus it acquired popularity as an administrative rule which husbanded the national resources. It would have brought on its own destruction, if it had been merely intent upon hoarding money; but it was obliged to exert its inventive genius in order to promote the general prosperity, were it only to attain its own particular objects.

This was quite conformable to the ideas which Frederic William professed. He was of opinion, that there were rights of government which the prince should never allow to fall into the hands of the states, who had no views beyond their own interests.

It was quite to his liking that the nobles were confined to their own particular concerns ; and the magistrates of the towns also were obliged to learn to distinguish between municipal revenues and those which belonged to the crown. Even with regard to the former, he intended to control their administration, and to curtail their privileges. That he was fond of ruling by means of foreigners, or of men of learning, whom he frequently appointed to the first places, was without doubt owing to his wish never to allow any particular class-interest to gain influence over his government. He at least had always the advancement of the general interest in view. Indeed he said that he had founded his state on military power ; it was he who created the regiments which have become the nucleus of the Prussian army, and who framed those articles of war, which needed only to be developed ; yet, on the other hand, it was also he who dug the canal which bears his name ; and what a pleasure it was to him, after having taken his repast in the bottom of it, to cause the sluices to be opened, and the waters let in, which were to unite the Oder and the Elbe ! And soon were vessels of Breslau and Hamburg seen to meet each other at Berlin.* His own electoral post department connected Memel with Cleves ; and after having once organized it as best suited his wants, he would not allow any objections of Prince Taxis to interfere with its

* Sam. Grosser: "*Gaudent Hamburgi commercia viarum, quibus navigia—merces Berolinum deferunt opportunis flexibus.*"

management. He promoted the cultivation of flax in the March, and made most strenuous exertions for the improvement of agriculture.* But, above all, he took care to uphold the peasantry, and encouraged the immigration of industrious husbandmen, settling Oldenlanders in the Wische, Dutch in the fens of the Havel and the Warthe, and French in the resuscitated towns.

His military affairs seemed rather to have impelled than damped his ardour for the advancement of general knowledge. In the midst of the dangers which threatened Prussia, he founded the university of Duisburg.† From his camp in Jutland, he ordered the appointment of the first librarian at Berlin.‡

A man of the most simple habits; when he was walking through the market-place, he would buy a pair of nightingales, as he loved to have singing birds in his apartments. He engrafted in his orchard with his own hand a slip brought from far; at Potzdam he assisted in gathering the grapes in the vineyard, and catching the young carp in the pond. But with all that, he was fond of a certain magnificence of style, and he liked to decorate himself with the star which distin-

* Joan Scarlet, *Agricultura Borussico-Brandenburgica*, demands the application of chymistry to agriculture.

† He had, during his absence, for vice-regent, John Maurice of Nassau-Siegen, who most effectually aided all the efforts made for the advancement of the country in the path of civilization. Seyler, *Life and Achievements of Frederic William*, p. 39.

‡ Wilkin, *History of the Library of Berlin*, p. 13.

guished him from all his subjects.* He procured for his queen the most costly jewels from the Netherlands and from Paris. He was all but offended, if any body reminded him of the cost of one of his hobbies; for he lived, as he said, in such a manner, that nobody had any right to criticize his expenditure. If he had once declared that he wished to buy some particular thing, no price would deter him from getting it.

I have seen a great number of autograph letters from him to his most confidential councillor, Otho von Schwerin. All public affairs and domestic occurrences are discussed in them in a style of most cordial friendship. The prince, for instance, wishes his minister a happy good morning, or God's assistance in the approaching confinement of his good wife. But, nevertheless, the latter was not allowed to mingle any personal matters with business: once, at least, he is told rather sharply, not to shew any feelings where he had only to give his opinion.

From Frederic William's strong features, which bore the impress of a mind tried throughout a long life, a rare combination of sternness and benevolence, of kindness and majesty,† beamed forth, if we may trust the portraits of him which still exist, and the assurances of those who knew him. Let no one,

* It is seen from the accounts how frequently it was to be replaced.

† Pufendorf, p. 1652. "*Majestas venerationem provocare apta, sed quam luculentæ bonitatis stricturæ temperabant, ut non minus amoris conciperes.*"

however, believe that these qualities had, as it were, been born with him. On the contrary, he was naturally hasty, and many a man had to suffer from the outbursts of his hot temper. At the same time, he had a certain gentleness of heart, which made him capable of sympathy; but he was formed, as in his youth, by misfortune, so, in his latter years, by the difficulty of the circumstances in which he was placed—the continual struggle with superior powers, and the constant dangers menaced by these fluctuations, which incessantly agitated Europe. It would have led him into certain ruin, if, in facing them, he had followed the impulse of the moment. What was required in such a position, was rather endurance and patience, wary foresight, and command of temper. One had most carefully to consider, not so much what one would, as what one could do. Oxenstiern already commends the assiduity with which the elector in his youth used to attend the meetings of his privy council, and tells us how he had even given himself the trouble of writing down the different opinions. Thus he went on to the very last years of his life in unwearied diligence. When suffering the most acute pains of gout, he was seen seated for hours plodding with his secretary through the dispatches which had come in, in order that he might personally inform himself of every thing;* then there were still some more secret

* "*Nec ullis recreationum illecebris nec acerrimis morbi articularis doloribus, quibus ingravescente ætate sæpius infestabatur, inde avelli (potuit).*" Pufendorf, 1633.

affairs which he reserved for himself alone. But most matters were discussed at the council board. Frederic William was considered one of the wisest men in Europe, of profound thought, and mature experience; yet it would happen, that, in the council, he dropped an opinion which he had already adopted, when he had convinced himself that another was better.* His judgment was compared to the inclination of the tongue of the balance; it turned almost without any bias of its own to that side on which the greater weight of reasons was to be found; "and then," he says, "whatever I have once resolved in the privy council, that I will have carried out."† We have already seen how little regard he paid to traditional privileges. His maxims were, to consider well, and to execute speedily; when there is an urgent necessity, no privileges ought to avail; as soon as any business was once set on foot, he would have deemed his authority compromised, if he did not complete it. Towards individual opponents he never shewed forbearance, not even when they were men of undeniable merit, as the example of Paul Gerhard may prove. His rule was not agreeable nor popular. It was complained, that words were almost made as much of as actions, and that sometimes one man had to suffer for the offences of all.‡ His intellectual supe-

* An instance is to be found in the relation quoted by Raumer, "Europe since 1763," i, 466.

† Letter to Schwerin, February 8, 1671.

‡ Zarlang. "Non ea temporum felicitas, quæ sentire, quæ velia, et dicere quæ sentias, audeas; non enim, ut quondam, dicta impune manent."

riority as a prince sprang from the proud consciousness of his high rank, which never left him for one moment; so that, in all that he did, he felt that he was only fulfilling a mission, which allowed him no arbitrary discretion. His mind had an ample grasp,—one might almost say too ample, if it be remembered how he put Brandenburg in immediate connexion with the coast of Guinea; and undertook to rival Spain on the ocean; or how he entered upon the plan of founding, for the promotion of general science, a university which was to have been independent of all the distinctions of the several Christian confessions. He did not despair of the success of the occult sciences; he loved to hear of the extraordinary and the marvellous; but, at the same time, he was thoroughly practical. The development of his power was, in a great measure, owing to the well-considered and well-calculated use of the experience which he had acquired abroad, and which he now adapted to things as they were at home.

This combination of a practical turn with a powerful imagination which would not shrink from any enterprise because at first sight it seemed impossible, imparts to his character something grand and heroic. Where everything may be calculated, there it is not worth while to make observations. We feel, that he is surrounded by that spiritual atmosphere in which genius breathes; his actions come out in bold relief from an immeasurable back-ground. The pervading principle of this energetic and highly intellectual life is religion. Even late in life, he mentioned how his

mother had once given him the precept, to love God above all, and then his subjects; to hate vice, and God would establish his throne. This rule he followed throughout the whole of his life. Twice he refused the Polish crown, as he wished not to swerve from the profession in which he was sure of his salvation.* But, however faithfully he clung to it, being able even to enter upon all the disputed points of doctrine, he had no mind to set the reformed at his court before the Lutherans. His religion was by no means narrowed to his particular confession. Raised above mere forms, he felt that he stood in an intimate and personal relationship to God. He always thought himself to be under the immediate guidance of Him, who had already so often miraculously saved him, and he carried this conviction even into matters of business. In the firmly settled state of things which now exists, we no longer easily understand those moments of danger and distress which Frederic William experienced in his days. In those moments, when arguments of policy would avail no more, in the

* In 1661, when his wife objected, if for no other reason, but for this, because, although they might promise him liberty of religion in Poland, they would not be able to keep their pledge; and in 1668, when many senators informed him, that they would gladly confer the crown on him, if he would accept of it, to which he answered, "that he deemed it impossible, in the first place, because reasons of policy would never allow two such powers, as the Polish and the Prussian ones, to be united"; and then, "as to changing, for the sake of a crown, my religion, in which is my hope of going to heaven, I shall not do that in all eternitv."

sleepless nights which then followed, he prayed to God to let him find out what was best for him, and then he abode steadfastly in the counsel which occurred to him. His was a sterling mind, austere, and overcoming the world; but at the same time pliable, benevolent, set upon the things of eternity; he was indeed full of pride in his bearing towards the king of France and the emperor, but before God without a thought of self. Governing was for him not a business, but the very principle of life, which he derives from the mysterious source of every existence,—from God.

And measuring things by an ideal standard, he shewed in all his actions the stamp of greatness.

After having thus sketched the principles of his domestic government, we have, although likewise only in a general way, to consider what was the position taken by him with regard to the affairs of Europe, in which he had already begun to have an independent and active share, and how in this respect he understood and treated his own interests, and those of all Germany.

The key-stone of the whole policy of the elector Frederic William was, that in the changes and chances of the Polish Prussian war, he found it less advisable to be allied with Sweden, France, and the Protector of England, who were engaged in a common attack against Spain, emperor and empire, and Poland, than with the same threatened powers of old Europe. In the election of Leopold I, he had the

greatest share : his vote unquestionably turned the scale.* Not only he himself, but others also, have allowed him the chief merit of this affair.

This alliance, by means of which the peace of Oliva was gained, was renewed in the year 1666, without reference to the then existing circumstances. It is the first general alliance between Austria and Brandenburg.† Frederic William intended to keep henceforth to emperor and empire, and in that alliance to oppose the two intruding powers in Germany, the French and the Swedes.

We shall not repeat here what has been told so often, how in the year 1672, when Louis XIV's aggressive policy against Holland displayed itself, the elector was nearly the first of all the European princes to resist it. Events only acquired a direct importance when Louis turned his arms also against the empire, and induced the Swedes, although they were wavering at this time, to make common cause with him.

In October 1674, we find Frederic William beyond

* According to an Italian relation of the election of the emperor in 1657 (MS.), Treves reproaches his colleagues of Mayence and Cologne, "che un elettore giovane e secolare mostrasse maggior zelo delli arcivescovi più riguardevoli d'Alemagna."

† May 10, 1666. The first treaty of 1658 had been concluded for ten years, to which the second added ten more, to date from the expiration of the first period: "durabit hoc fœdus non solum pendente termino prædicti prioris decennii, sed post ejus termini lapsum alios decem annos." In 1672 another ten years were added. Pufendorf, xi, 50.

the Rhine. He wished to fight Turenne, who allowed himself to be surprised in an unfavourable position. He is said to have flattered himself with the hope of advancing as far as Paris. But, in the meanwhile, the Swedes also broke forth, at once overrunning the Brandenburg territories, there to renew, after having kept quiet for so short a period, all the horrors of the thirty years war.

Hanover, likewise, and the Polish king, Sobiesky, threatened him. He was quite aware of the dangers which beset him on every side; but, at the same time he felt that he had courage to meet them. The empire proclaimed the Swedes public enemies, and promised to procure the elector satisfaction against them.* The Republic of the United Provinces pledged itself to a similar engagement. With so much the greater spirit he marched to meet the intruders.

It was, without doubt, the proudest day of his life, when, with his well-trained army (which was, however, in numbers far inferior to that of the enemy) he fell near Fehrbellin upon the Swedes, who were everywhere retreating. The advice of his best generals was against the attack; but he would not allow the fierce enemy, who had devastated his country for seven months, to march off with impunity. Raising

* On January 18, 1676, the high-marshal of the empire was enjoined not to call up any more the crown of Sweden, nor to allow anybody to vote as its proxy, as it had been denounced an enemy by emperor and empire. Pachner, ii, 2.

the battle cry, "With God!" he attacked, and, as it is well known, utterly routed them. This was the greatest battle which the Brandenburgers had won single-handed in the just defence of their country. The elector attributed all to the will of God, whose miraculous intervention he witnessed, as he thought, with his own eyes, just at the most dangerous moment of the battle.*

And now he was resolved upon entirely ridding himself of these troublesome neighbours, by conquering Pomerania, and avenging himself upon them. The emperor might in the meanwhile try his luck against the French, "in order that," as the elector says, "the holy Roman empire, freed from the yoke of all foreign people, might abide in peace and safety."

He himself succeeded admirably, as he felt engaged in a struggle for life and death.

In the year 1657, he took the strong castle of Wolgast. He says, with a sort of exultation, that by the many shells he had caused to be thrown, that part of the castle in which the powder was had been set on fire, and the rest by red-hot shot, and that the

* The medal (Oelrich's Cabinet of Medals, 43, 44, 45, 46), on which Froben is represented falling before him, bears the legend, "A Domino hoc factum est mirabile in oculis nostris." The achievement of Emanuel Froben was this, that, without properly belonging to the army, he followed his master, and riding before him, was killed by a bullet, which otherwise would have struck the prince himself.

numerous garrison had thus been forced to surrender, —“One may see,” he exclaimed, “that God’s hand is with us!”

In the year 1676, a little squadron under the Brandenburg flag, partly his own, partly hired, which he stationed on the principal points of the coast, was of great service to him in his enterprises by land. He seized the two towns of Anclam and Demmin, as also the islets in the mouth of the Oder.

In the year 1677, he undertook the reduction of the fortress of Stettin, which, as it was of the greatest importance to him, he had already encircled by his troops; for his method of waging war was not without generalship. The Swedish garrison, in conjunction with the burghers, who had still a high notion of the military prowess of the Swedes, and who did not doubt but that they should be relieved in time, made a desperate resistance. Frederic William, on the other hand, boasted that he would either take the town, or be buried before it. At length the commandant declared, that he would no longer be in the way of that success which had everywhere attended the elector; and the burghers said very ingeniously, that their dutiful conduct to the crown of Sweden made them now first worthy of being received into the favour and protection of his excellent highness the elector. They paid him an homage which they expected to be a lasting one.

In November 1678, the whole of the Pomeranian territory was cleared of the Swedes, who from Li-

vonias had made an invasion into Prussia. In the hope of fighting with them another pitched battle, the elector hastened with all speed to the endangered provinces, the army being carried on sledges, January 1679, over the ice of the Haff; but the enemy retreated everywhere before him in wild confusion,—dead bodies, left unburied, marking out the way for the pursuers. On a medal of that time, we see the Brandenburg eagle, roused from his eyrie, falling upon the lion of the north, which is intent upon its prey.

Matters, however, had not gone on so well in the western frontier. The French had conquered, on the Upper Rhine, Freyburg, and in the Netherlands, a whole series of fortresses.

The elector called upon the emperor to continue the war in spite of all these reverses. "As their forces," he argued, "were now no more divided by the Swedish diversion, they might be wholly employed against the French, so as to drive these foes also out of Germany, or at least to oblige them to make a peace, that in time would profit the empire, and above all secure the possession of Strasburg, a place which otherwise would certainly be lost." He devised the plan for a new campaign, in which he himself would join at the head of twenty thousand men.

Although it cannot be denied, that Frederic William acted for his own interest, yet thus much is certain, that the German empire could never prosper any more, unless foreign powers and their influence were got rid of.

But the allies, Holland as well as Spain, now that the immediate danger had passed away, had already got tired of the war, and so the emperor declared that he had taken up arms for their sake only, and shewed himself inclined to peace.

By the latter, not only the ascendancy of France in the west must be settled, but also the fate of the north decided. Louis XIV insisted upon the restoration to the Swedes of the provinces which they had lost, as a condition without which he would not conclude a peace.

The elector reminded the emperor, that they were the same enemy whose arms had so often been seen from the towers and gates of Vienna; that with the sacrifice of his own health, and of the lives and fortunes of his subjects, he had successfully driven them off from the territory of the empire. He could not believe that "the implacable enemy" was to be brought back, and settled by his side. He also made the same representations to the diet; but in vain. The indemnity which had been promised was no longer mentioned, and the peace was concluded with the concession of all demands. The elector was obliged to give up his conquests; nothing was left to him but a small strip of country which he had succeeded in keeping at a former settlement, just enough, as a Venetian said, to remind him of the rest. He had even to suffer the annoyance of having his political conduct censured in his family, and at his court. He ought, it was said, to have listened to the French,

when in the height of the war they offered him Stettin, and not to have clung to an alliance which now proved so unstable; he was sure to be a loser, who exerted himself for the welfare of the German empire.

The elector began to feel as if he could have wished Louis XIV himself to have been the Roman emperor. In this case Strasburg at least would not have been severed from the empire, a calamity which it was now out of the power of any one to prevent. His ambition directed itself against the powers formerly allied with him, especially against Austria, to which he had claims to oppose of the vastest importance. The great Silesian question turned up, which in later times was to lead to quite a different settlement. It will be best to say something about it in this place.

In the year 1537, the elector Joachim II had concluded a family compact with the nearly allied Piast dukes of Liegnitz, according to which, at the extinction of the electoral house, the fiefs which the latter held of the crown of Bohemia were to fall to the dukes; and, on the other hand, should the ducal house become extinct, its Silesian principalities of Liegnitz, Wohlau, and Brieg, were to revert to Brandenburg. The act indeed mentions the doubt entertained whether Brandenburg had the right to make such a stipulation without being authorized to do so by the king of Bohemia; yet there existed not the slightest doubt but that the dukes of Liegnitz on their side were fully entitled to conclude such an arrangement. We must

not consider the power of a supreme duke in Silesia in the light of a German territorial dominion; it had only been lately founded on a submission more or less voluntary of the particular duchies; the latter continually reserved to themselves an independence which was not otherwise usual in German countries; and especially they looked upon themselves as free owners of their hereditary possessions, disposing of them by sale, or mortgage, or in any other manner they pleased. The dukes of Liegnitz had with reference to this point a charter of privilege to show from the Jaghellon kings, which was couched in the most unambiguous terms.

But it is not to be wondered at if the then king and supreme duke, Ferdinand I of Austria, objected to a compact which might transfer such an extensive territory to a neighbouring powerful house. Supported by the victories of his brother, Charles V, over the Smalcaldic league, with which the Silesians had been closely connected, he obliged the dukes of Liegnitz to set aside that compact, and the states of the country to do homage to the crown of Bohemia.

But it was just as natural, that, for all this, Brandenburg would not renounce the rights which it had acquired before, but that it declared the measures of the king to have been acts less of justice than of violence, and protested against them. This was all that was done, and the unpleasant affair was not much talked of, as at the time it was only of remote interest.

But very unexpectedly it rose at once into import-

ance, owing to the death of the young duke George William, in the year 1675.

The house of Austria immediately took possession of the country, and the elector, busily engaged in his Pomeranian undertaking, found it advisable for the moment to be silent. But after what had occurred at the peace of Nimeguen, when all the old differences were stirred up again, and the claims to Jägerndorf were revived, he deemed it necessary to bring forward also that affair. He therefore called upon the emperor to fix a time when he was to be invested with his hereditary duchies of Liegnitz, Wohlau, and Brieg.

Yet who could have expected that the imperial court, which likewise thought that it had the right upon its side, would accede to such a demand? The Spanish ambassador told the envoy of Brandenburg, that the house of Austria would never allow a Protestant family to gain a footing in the midst of the countries of its inheritance, were it only for this reason, that all the remnants of the Evangelicals would rally around it.

But this very circumstance gave the ruler of Brandenburg a yet more extensive interest in the affair. A vast prospect was opened to it, of increasing, not only its territory, but also its influence upon Germany and Europe.

What then, if Frederic William, exasperated and offended as he was, undertook to enforce his claims, assisted by France, with which he had since formed a very intimate connexion? Of his rights to Jägern-

dorf he had already given intimation to the king of France, and received from him the promise of his support. Such an ally was precisely what the king wanted for gaining a decided ascendancy in Europe. Nothing appeared more dangerous at Vienna than this alliance. The court declined a subsidiary force which the elector offered against the Turks, imminent as was the danger of the war; it was thought that the Brandenburgers might on their march place themselves in possession of the Silesian principalities, and serious apprehensions were entertained, lest the elector, allied with Louis XIV, should sever himself from the empire.

This was, however, so little thought of, that Brandenburg, on the contrary, had already been warned that the league with France could not last.

Whoever in Europe had still any feeling of independence left, must have been roused by the violent acts which Louis XIV then committed. His religious tyranny most intimately affected the Protestant princes, and of all who opposed the revocation of the edict of Nantes, Frederic William was the chief.

This time it was not merely apprehension for the future of Germany, but even for the common cause of Protestantism, that drove Brandenburg back to Austria. Both of these powers saw from their different points of view, that they must join against France; and before long the only remaining question was, how to bring about a settlement of the differences which had lately arisen.

This, however, presented an immense difficulty, as

the Brandenburg ministers rejected every compromise, which only proposed a trifling indemnification, alleging that the rights were too great which were to be yielded in exchange; and, on the other hand, those of the emperor would not hear of any equivalent being made in territory and subjects.

Then a wily imperial minister, Baron Freitag von Gödens, devised an expedient which settled everything for the moment, but was fraught with the most important consequences for the future.

He negotiated a treaty in which Austria really ceded a tract of country, although a small one, and Brandenburg, on the other hand, entered into the closest alliance with the imperial house.

In the secret treaty, which was concluded on the twenty-second of March 1686, at Berlin, Brandenburg engages to make common cause with Austria in all German and European affairs; to oppose, in the first place, the French encroachments which were then directed against the Palatinate; moreover, to give in a new election for the empire, its vote to an archduke; and especially to assist in defending the rights of the German branch to the Spanish succession, under conditions to be eventually defined. Austria, on her side, granted some subsidies, which, however, were not of great amount,—in peace of 100,000 florins, in war of 100,000 dollars—but principally she yielded so far as to make concessions in the matter of Silesia. “In order to prevent any misunderstandings which might be apprehended, as a proof of his friendship to

the electoral house, and especially for the establishment of this close alliance," the emperor declared that he gave up to the elector and his male descendants the circle of Schwiebus in Silesia, and the Lichtenstein reversion of East Friesland, and the elector renounced all the former claims, as soon as the latter could be made good.

When we read this, we might ask, how the Brandenburg ministers now at last departed from their often repeated declarations, and for insignificant concessions, not only gave up extensive claims and rights, but also took upon themselves obligations which fettered their policy for an indefinite period to come. Had they not always said, that it was better, rather not to accept of anything, and to reserve their claims in all their integrity for a future time?

Ilgen, who was already then engaged in public business, and afterwards rose to the direction of the foreign department, explains this from the fact that this treaty was not communicated at all to the principal ministers; who were most determined upon this point. They were only shewn collateral treaties, an agreement concerning subsidiary troops to be employed against the Turks, also a recess touching the cession of Schwiebus, in which, however, all that had been settled with reference to the Spanish succession was carefully omitted;* and not more than two of

* The treaties are: 1. One, relating to the Turkish war, dated December 25, 1685; extracts given by Pufendorf, who states, however, the subsidiary force to have amounted to 8,000 men, whilst

them, Paul von Fuchs and Prince George of Anhalt, had any knowledge of the secret treaty. They were well-meaning men, who thought, no doubt, that they had done a very good piece of service to the house of Brandenburg, which, after all, had once more received an increase, and to the general welfare. But they also were deceived.

For when we raise the second question, how it was that Austria at last nevertheless allowed herself to be induced to make a cession of territory and subjects? we may easily see that she was not in earnest. Freytag carried on in the meanwhile a negociation with the electoral prince, by which all that cession was revoked. He represented that the whole demand was only urged by the partizans of France with the intention of making the alliance miscarry. The prince, who looked upon the friends of France as his own personal enemies, and apprehended from the influence of his step-mother upon his father some unfavourable testamentary clauses against which he wished to have a support in the emperor, readily entered upon those communications. Very imperfectly informed concerning the justice of his claims, as he himself afterwards

it consisted of 7,000 only. 2. An ostensible one concerning Schwiebus, of May 1686, signed by Freytag, and on the other side by Grumbkow, Meinders, Fuchs, Rhetz. 3. The defensive treaty of May 7 (printed in Förster), an abridgement of the one presently to be mentioned, with very important omissions, yet also with an addition. 3. The real secret alliance of March 22, 1686, in twenty-four articles, signed by Freytag, and on the side of Brandenburg by Fuchs only, ratified at Vienna, April 8.

told,* and without any advisers, as he was bound to the strictest secrecy, he allowed himself to be wheedled, first into a verbal, and then into a written promise of restoring the above-mentioned circle to the emperor immediately upon his accession.

The old elector had not the least suspicion of it. He had no other thought but that he had settled for ever the relations of his house to the imperial one. "The weather-beaten helmsman," as an English ambassador called him, believed that he had steered the right course. With that power of imagination which is always brooding over vast designs, he conceived the idea, that now, as Sweden was friendly to the cause of Germany, the decisive blow might be given to French ascendancy;—it was only necessary to penetrate into the interior of France, and to march at once on Paris. He considered it likely that the humiliated princes of the blood would rise once more; that the parliaments would resume the authority which they had been deprived of; and that the crushed Calvinists might be reinstated in their rights.* He comprehended in his

* Letter of Frederic from the camp near Bonn, 9-19 September, 1689.

† According to a memorandum of his, of the year 1688, which is still extant, the empire was to send 154,000 men into the field, Holland 35,000, Spain 10,000. A great imperial army was to collect on the Upper Rhine, and invade Burgundy and Lorraine; the army of Orange and Electoral Brandenburg would have to take the straight road to France and Paris, keeping the strictest discipline, in order not to give offence to anybody. "I will warrant," he says, "that the princes of the blood, as well as others,

scheme a restoration of the old constitutional, and partly Protestant France.

Had this been possible, the subsequent history of the world would have been a different one. He had as it were a presentiment, that for the quiet development of the affairs of Germany, it was necessary that its powerful western neighbour should march in the same track.

He was not, however, destined even to lay hand to his work. The sands of his life, as he expressed himself, (he had in his room a picture with this emblem) had run out. He died, April 1688, before the war had yet begun.

It will not be attempted to rank Frederic William among those few great men who have laid new foundations for the progress of mankind ; but he may be undoubtedly placed at the side of the most renowned princes of particular realms, to whom their countries have owed their deliverance from the greatest dangers, and the restoration of order,—as to an Alfred, to a Charles the Seventh, and to a Gustavus Wasa.

He walked in the footsteps of the old German territorial princes; yet there was no one amongst them, who both found his country in such a wretched condition, and so happily raised it from humiliation to independence. He imparted to his provinces a spirit of vitality, the political instinct of an independent state.

will be glad of it; the parliament, which is entirely stripped of its power, would side with us; Catholics, as well as the oppressed Protestants, would vie in shaking off the tyrannical yoke."

He created those institutions which warranted the progress both of the ruling power, and of the general welfare. What the world chiefly admired, and Frederic William himself prized most, was the condition of his army. He had at that time 175 companies of infantry, 76 troops of horse, and an artillery which he had just brought to a regular organization, and for the improvement of which he used often to make experiments himself: in all, about 28,000 men. There was nothing which he recommended to his successor so urgently, as the maintenance of this iron hand. With its help, he had gained elbow room between his neighbours, and restored the name of Protestantism in the north of Germany to that authority which was its due.

His state was, however, far from yet coming up to his ideas.

He had still innumerable designs for the improvement of the domestic government; a new survey of the country, in order to do away with the inequality of the land-tax; a commutation of the feudal burthens into an equitable money payment; the separation of the accomptants' department, and the general superintendence of the finances, from the executive administration. It occurred to him, that, of the numerous demesne lands, only so many farms ought to be kept in hand as were required for the subsistence of the court, but that all the rest should be let out to private individuals. He thought of a reform in the administration of justice, adopting those leading principles

which were always afterwards returned to,—clear definitions of the laws, so that every one might know what law was, an expeditious mode of procedure, and reduction of fees. He sought the means for putting a stop to the usury of monied men, to the exactions of inn-keepers, in short, to every kind of extortion. He everywhere acted upon the maxim which had guided him in his quarrel with the states, of rescuing the commonwealth from the encroachments of private cupidity. All public and common matters he considered to belong to the province of the princely authority, of the extent of which he entertained a lofty notion. Only it was necessary to find instruments, who would not attempt unlawful encroachments on the other side. He had himself to struggle with the mischiefs of faction, which could only then radically be remedied, if the newly founded state grew strong enough to uphold its principles with a high hand against any extraneous influence. But how far off lay this goal? We have seen that he could not even enforce his claims when they coincided with the general interests of Germany, not to mention the cases when he had to stand against the powerful states of the empire, or the emperor himself. He was mistaken in his belief that the very scanty indemnification which he had put up with had been granted him in good faith; and yet how short did it fall of what his ambition had aspired to! Frederic William had, without doubt, the intention of gaining a place among the northern kings; had he retained Pomerania, he would

also have actually assumed the crown. The native independence of his character impressed its own stamp on his political career: the latter was only the reflexion of the former.

The power which he left behind him imposed upon his successors the strongest motives for exertion and labour.

FREDERIC I.

Little, as the next heir and successor, Frederic, was to be compared to his father in natural energy, he cannot be charged with having shrunk from the task.

First of all, the fame of the Brandenburg army by no means retrograded during his reign. It took a very active share in the most important events of that time.

Prince William of Orange might have hesitated to have embarked in the undertaking by which he made himself king of England, had not the Dutch troops, which he was obliged for this purpose to take off from the territory of the United Provinces, been replaced by the forces of Brandenburg.* It has been impugned, yet a stricter inquiry leaves no doubt, but that other Brandenburgers in his service, and that of his republic, went over with him to England, where they very greatly contributed to his success.†

* Burnet's "History of his own Times," iii, 1326. And this gave the Prince of Orange great quiet."

† I believe Pufendorf, (iii, 46) and Dalrymple, who are among the best informed authors. The Brandenburg regiment, which is

When afterward the war broke out on the Rhine, the young elector Frederic, inflamed with religious ardour, patriotism, and personal ambition, appeared himself in the field. At the siege of Bonn, when he had once to fear for the issue, he stepped to the window, and prayed, that God would not allow him to come to dishonour in his first enterprise. He fortunately conquered Bonn and cleared all the lower Rhenish country of the enemy. He likewise won the reputation of intrepidity.

Thus, also, in the beginning of the war of the Spanish Succession, the presence of the prince contributed not a little to put a speedy end to the first important siege, that of Kaiserswerth, from which point the French at the same time threatened Holland and Westphalia.

But not only where the prince was present did his troops gain glory. At Höchstädt (Blenheim), they took their part most bravely in the fight. Prince Eugene, under whose command they were, does not know how to extol too highly the fearless constancy with which they first stood the charge of the enemy, and then, by their brisk fire, assisted in repelling it. And also, as at Höchstädt, they had taken an active share in deciding the fate of Germany: two years later, at Turin, they did the same for Italy. At their

mentioned in the reports of the expedition to England, and in that of the battle of Limerick in particular, belonged to Margrave Albert Frederic. To elucidate the relations between Brandenburg and the prince, researches ought to be made, not in the record offices of Holland and England, but in that of the house of Orange at the Hague.

head, Prince Leopold of Anhalt, under the fire of artillery, scaled the ramparts of the enemy; the Brandenburgers shouting to each other the battle cry, "Gah to!" (Go on!), the prototype of the modern "Vorwärts." They had never such an extended field for their military achievements as under Frederic I. At that time they became known to the Turks in dangerous pitched battles; they were seen to make their appearance at the attack on Toulon in the south of France: in the territory of the Pope, the Protestant field service was first celebrated in their camp. The inhabitants flocked to see it, and expressed a certain degree of satisfaction.* But the principal scene of their exploits was always in the Netherlands, an excellent school of war, as well for sieges as for pitched battles; the former under Cohorn, the Dutch Vauban, and under Marlborough, one of the greatest generals of all ages.

Frederic kept fast to the grand alliance, which his father had assisted in forming, as long as it still existed. The attention which he devoted to the general affairs of Europe, did not prove without advantage to himself and his house. From this very alliance, the acquisition of the crown, and the old Prussian royalty has originated. However little one may think of the outward attributes of title and rank, it cannot be denied, that the elevation to a higher step

* Buchholtz, "History of the Electoral March," iv, 281, from the mouth of the military chaplain.

in the scale of European sovereignty, as it then existed, was a thing well worthy of being sought after.

The Western principalities and republics still formed a great body, at the head of which the Roman emperor stood. What manifold and tedious transactions did it not cost even the crown of France to get the style and address of majesty which formerly belonged to the emperor only! The other kings wanted to be equal to the king of France; and the republic of Venice, not to be behind-hand, put forth similar pretensions on account of the kingdoms which it had once possessed. The electoral envoys at Vienna had to stand bare-headed whilst the Venetian one covered himself; but electors and reigning dukes were little pleased with this precedence: they also claimed the style of Most Serene Highness, the title of Brother, and for their envoys that of Excellency. Even for the most powerful electors it was difficult* to advance one step in the matter, because what they gained, was claimed also by others who were mere barons of the empire. Brandenburg had, therefore, certainly an interest at once to get rid of all negotiations of this sort, which were only a drag upon all business of real importance. We meet with the positive assurance of a superior functionary, that the royal title had been promised already to the elector Frederic

* An instance of the difficulties which the elector Frederic William met with in England, is stated by Pufendorf, xiv, 72; xv, 31. The blame of them was laid on the duke of York, who, as it was said, grudged the Protestants this honour.

William, whose son now set all his ambition upon gaining it.

Frederic, as elector, the Third, was one of the most popular princes who ever governed Brandenburg. His contemporaries praise him for abstaining from all excesses, and only devoting himself to his duties. It was said, that, whilst his subjects were still sleeping, he was already attending to their business, for he used to rise very early. In a certain poem, Phosphorus complains of being forestalled by the king of Prussia. He was mild, affable, truthful, and of even temper. In his conversations "fair and princely" thoughts are conspicuous; in his written papers which we have seen, circumspect and judicious treatment of the subject matter displays itself; he shared to a great extent in that love of state and outward magnificence which was so peculiar to the age; yet it had with him, at the same time, an object beyond mere shew. The works of architecture and statuary which were completed under his reign, are monuments of a pure taste, finer than which the capital never saw. He liked to indulge in the feeling of that greatness which his father had founded,—that he was possessing four times as many countries as would constitute an electorate, and was able to send into the field a force which would make him equal to kings; but he now wished also, that this should be openly acknowledged. He was not wanting in treasure and wealth to keep up the splendour of a crown. In the father, this thought had been blended with designs of conquest;

in the son it was rather a personal and family ambition.

Must it not be admitted, that without a succession of so many praiseworthy princes, the rise of a state like this would have been impossible? In their series he also wanted to appear with distinguished merit. "Since Frederic I," he says, "has brought the electoral dignity into my house, I should, as Frederic III, be glad to bring the royal one into it,—according to the old adage, 'Omne trinum perfectum.'"

He first thought seriously of the scheme in the year 1693. He had at that time led some troops to Crossen, to assist the emperor against the Turks; yet the imperial ministers had neither come in the right time to receive them, nor had they, when they at last appeared, brought with them certain promises and pledges which Frederic expected, who, rather vexed at being slighted at a moment when he was rendering important services, betook himself to Carlsbad. There he was joined by his envoy from Vienna, whom the ministers in that capital had charged with an apology for their inadvertence. With his approbation, and that of his brother, the first minister, Dankelmann, Frederic resolved now publicly to make known the wish which he had hitherto only entertained in secret, and merely hinted at in his conversations: the envoy was instructed to make a formal petition.

Nothing, however, was to be gained for the present. At the court of Vienna, Count Cettingen rose again into power, who was hostile to the Protestant princes.

The dangers were no more imminent; the coalition was gradually falling off; and so the whole affair ended in a very vague promise.

Frederic III did not, however, abandon his scheme on that account. The elevation of the house of Saxony to the Polish throne,—the expectations of the nearly allied family of Hanover to the crown of England,—perhaps even the difficulties which he met with,—rather whetted his eagerness to gain his point; in the complicated relations which the impending vacancy of the Spanish throne occasioned between the great European powers, a most favourable opportunity presented itself for returning to it. The court of Vienna could not be propitiated by the remembrance of services already rendered, but rather by the hope of future ones.

It would be out of place here to treat at much length of the transactions which passed concerning that petition. Let us merely state that the prince always devoted his whole attention to it, and never lost sight of his position in all its bearings.

Proposals of the most extraordinary nature were made to him;—for instance, to apply to the pope,* to whom the power of conferring the royal dignity belonged in a much higher degree than to the emperor. On the other hand, zealously Protestant

* *Réflexions sur la couronne et la Majesté royale due à S. A. E. Monseigneur l'électeur de Brandebourg, et à sa sérénissime et très-puissante maison.* (Seems to be written by Father Vota.)

ministers wished to avoid even that contact with the Romish element which was implied in an approximation to the emperor, and to make the elevation of rank dependant upon some new important acquisition, as perhaps that of Polish Prussia, the chance of which seemed to them not so very remote. Frederic, on the contrary, maintained that he might base the royal dignity already on the sovereign duchy of Prussia, which belonged to him, and that for this purpose the acknowledgement of the emperor would be of greater consequence to him than anything else. He was of opinion that when the emperor had once got hold of the Spanish inheritance, or had concluded treaties concerning it, nothing more was to be expected from him; but that now, since he was able to afford him as much assistance as any power in the world, he might make his own terms. And thus he resolved upon proposing an offer, which acquired immense weight from the circumstances under which it took place.

In March 1700, England, Holland, and France had concluded among themselves a treaty for the partition of the Spanish monarchy, in which the hereditary right of Austria was treated as quite subordinate to the preservation of the balance in Europe. Spain and the Indies were indeed to be assigned to the young archduke Charles; but he was neither to have Naples and the two Sicilies, nor Milan: should the archduke ever become Roman emperor, Spain and the Indies were to be transferred to another prince of more distant claims. This treaty was received with the utmost

disgust at Vienna, where they called upon heaven to interfere in the business.

At this moment Brandenburg offered to make common cause with the emperor, not only in opposition against France, but also against England and Holland, his old allies; the only favour which he asked in return being the acknowledgment of his royal dignity.

The principal objection against it arose from the difference of faith. It is very true that the confessor of the emperor, father Wolf,* did something towards removing it: he took some share in the transaction; but the most powerful motive was without doubt the political state of affairs. An acknowledgment in which nothing was lost could not be thought too high a price for the assistance of the most warlike German power in such a momentous crisis. In July 1700, the great conference of the imperial ministers came to the resolution that the wish of the elector might be acceded to, and after the conditions had been settled which stipulated the closest alliance, as well for war as for the domestic policy of the empire, the treaty was signed November 16, 1700. On the side of Brandenburg care was only taken not to insert any word

* That the father had been applied to in consequence of a mistake of the cypher, has indeed been asserted by men of good authority, and yet it is hardly credible. At least in the dispatches the correct cypher is quite apparent. Father Wolf had for a long time been known at the court of Berlin, and had rendered himself useful to it. Times followed indeed, when people there would no more understand, that anybody could be consulted in important affairs, but those holding the high places in the state.

which might have implied more than a consent and approbation of the emperor. As to the right of crowning himself, the elector derived it from his own title.

He would, however, in other quarters have met with many unpleasant obstacles, if he had not been aided by the events which had in the meanwhile come to pass in Spain and in France.

The will of the last of the house of Habsburg who reigned in Spain was opened. It was quite in favour of the French king, whose grandson was declared by it heir of the whole monarchy. Upon this, Louis XIV abandoned the partition treaty, which had been concluded under his auspices, and resolved upon availing himself of the greater advantage, and accepting the inheritance. This of necessity aroused all the antipathies which had ever been arrayed against France: England and Holland sided once more with Austria.

Now the objections were silenced which those two powers had formerly raised against the new crown. They saw in the elevation of Brandenburg a common advantage.

Frederic came to an agreement likewise with the king of Poland, although not with the republic, and he could now, with the approbation of all his old allies, set about the magnificent act of his coronation, which his heart yearned after.

We will not describe the ceremonies of January 18, 1701. They appear tawdry to our taste when we read of them, yet the self-coronation is not wanting

in dignity. That the unction does not precede but follow it, being performed by two ministers recently appointed bishops for the occasion, is expressive of an independence of the secular power of the spiritual one, the like of which was perhaps never shewn at any other coronation, either before or after.

The spiritual element appeared with the only independence which has been left to it in the Protestant states,—that of precept and exhortation. The provost (dean) of Berlin shewed, from the example of Christ and David, that kingly government ought to be wielded for the honour of God, and for the good of the subject. He points out as the first principle to be attended to by rulers, that they are in the world for the sake of their subjects, and not their subjects for their sake. He exhorts those present to pray that God would deeply impress this truth in the hearts of all rulers.

The foundation of the order of the Black Eagle, which immediately preceded the coronation, has a reference to the duties of royalty. The motto on its insignia, "*Suum cuique*," refers, as we are assured by Lamberty, who himself suggested it, to the definition of a just government, in which the good as well as the evil are dealt with according to their deserts: the laurel and lightning are meant as emblems of reward and punishment. The idea at least is right royal.

Leibnitz, who was then in close relation with the court, and paid much attention to this affair, remarks very justly, that nothing can be complete without its

name. The elector of Brandenburg had possessed all that was kingly; but he was only a king by being called a king.

Although the new dignity was founded on Prussia only, yet the title and rank comprehended all the provinces. Those belonging to the German empire were as it were set apart from the mass of the other German countries, and joined in a particular body, however carefully else the connexion with the empire was kept up. This separate position made the acquisition of the royal dignity very important, and even necessary for the progress of the Prussian state, and it is not too much to say, that, without it, things would have taken a very different course.

The name of Prussia called to mind that military power whose noble deeds and growing fame we mentioned before.

But also on another field, the new state seemed to identify itself with a developement of a most remarkable description.

In Berlin, which Frederic William had opened to the exiles of Louis XIV,—and where Frederic, in whose reign they arrived in still greater numbers, gave them a reception which made his old subjects almost jealous,—some men of letters also took up their abode, who from thence continued those literary feuds in which they had been interrupted by the arbitrary measures of the French Government, which had sided with their adversaries.

It was quite in accordance with the European posi-

tion of the rising state,—which with all its might opposed the ascendancy of the empire then pre-eminently Papist,—that from Berlin attempts were made to ward off on the field of literature the attacks which the opinions, reigning paramount in the antagonist states, were making against the ideas of Protestantism. The writers of the Anglican Church, the professors of the Dutch universities, and the refugees settled at Berlin, formed as it were a coalition, as well as the states to which they belonged. What the latter defended with the power of arms, these attempted to uphold on an intellectual field.

There was in Berlin Jacques Lenfant, of whom it is said, that after every conversation with his friends, who liked to meet at his house, he used to feel, instead of exhaustion, a new impulse on the contrary for literary labour: the reason of which probably was, that those of the same way of thinking confirmed one another in their opinions, and vied with each other in discovering the weak points of their antagonists. They were engaged in continual controversies against the assertions and doctrines of the Jesuits. Lenfant's labours were particularly directed to the transactions of the great councils of the fifteenth century. He was the first to write the history of the Council of Constance from authentic documents, which had then been collected. Bishop Burnet places his performance at the side of the work of Paul Sarpi on the Council of Trent.

Still greater were the merits of Isaac de Beausobre.

His book on the Manichees ranks with the most instructive and ingenious which have ever been written on an heretical sect.

Both of them were popular preachers: Lenfant for his vivacity, Beausobre for his elevation and nobleness of language. Their joint translation of the New Testament into French has acquired an immense influence, being a work both of theological and of practical value, and it was hailed with great applause by all the Reformed, even the English.

They had for fellow-labourers, Vignoles, and Lacroze.

The former had, while yet in France, been led, by the assertion of Richard Simon that a chronology of the Old Testament could not be written, to venture upon the attempt; and, after having devoted himself to the task with the greatest diligence, he completed at length at Berlin a work on that subject, which has always enjoyed a very fair reputation. Yet the other possessed perhaps a still more decided talent for curious learning. He met in a masterly style the paradoxes of Hardouin; for it was even deemed necessary to combat the extravagances of the French schools: his Coptic studies have, after a long time, gained an importance for the elucidation of the most ancient history of the world, which he himself could not have foreseen.

It was certainly of the greatest moment, that in the rising capital of northern Germany, where, in consequence of the immigration, people were intimately

familiarized with every branch of the French literature,—then the European one,—the Protestant principle acquired such a sound literary exposition.

But besides this, within the pale of German Protestantism itself, new movements had begun, which, amid opposition and struggles, became the harbingers of a new developement. From the depth of Lutheran theology, and the philosophy connected with it, new tendencies arose, in opposition indeed to the systems which were just prevailing, but resting on the same ground with them.

In opposition to outward orthodoxy, the necessity of active faith and godliness of life was urged by Philip Spener and his friends, who made it their task to awaken a spirit of deeper practical piety in the youthful pastors of the people.

Then arose a politico-theological school, which would not allow the whole life of the state to be governed by the spiritual principle, but claimed for the former a separate province, for the maintenance of civil order and tranquillity.

These views might easily have been exaggerated and perverted, yet they had a good deal of truth in them, and were thoroughly Protestant. Besides which, a deeper sense of religion, and disgust at the abuses of mere formalism and the notion of merit, and on the other hand the upholding of the rights and duties inherently belonging to the state, had made the Reformation possible, and established it.

In Brandenburg, the resolution was formed, not

only to allow, but also to procure, free scope for both of these principles.

Another reason for this was, that the prevailing system had always entertained a great hostility against the reformed house of Brandenburg, and had imbued its disciples with it. Strict Lutheranism was, from its original nature and developement, favourable to the institution of estates, and, indeed, of provincial estates. A mode of government resting on its own power could not possibly feel called upon to favour that confession.

In short, when Spener and his friends were obliged to leave Saxony, where the old system kept its ground, a far greater stage was opened to their exertions in the Brandenburg provinces. The university of Halle was founded, principally with a view of rescuing the candidates of the six thousand livings, which the country contained, from a hostile, and likewise narrow-minded influence. Here the disciples very soon exhibited a theoretically, as well as practically, energetic and thorough-going activity: in the capital, in the neighbourhood of the court, the master himself, milder and more pliant than these, but not less undaunted, exercised his holy calling.

The man, who at first emancipated the rights of nature from the fetters of the theological system, and without impugning revelation, had maintained the well-founded claims of reason,—Samuel Pufendorf, had already been entrusted by Frederic with the

most honourable mission which he could have given him,—that of writing the history of his father with fearless veracity.

A far greater influence upon that literary movement of the time, by which general convictions were transformed, was exercised by Christian Thomasius. He applied these principles of political right also to ecclesiastical legislation. It was, after all, an immense difference, when formerly the ecclesiastical power had been considered merely as the authority upholding the pure doctrine in accordance with the decision given by the divines, and he, on the contrary, assigned to it only the office of taking care that no dissensions between them should disturb the peace of the civil community. He thus aided those attempts at toleration which were, at that time, a necessity between the two Protestant parties, and on the realization of which Frederic I set his glory.*

In general, Thomasius has been one of the most efficient professors who have ever lectured at a German university; not so much owing to the subject-matter of his lectures, as to his method of hitting just upon what was essential and most worthy of notice. We read, in the prefaces and dedications of books, the most varied expressions of grateful remembrance of him, or of his disciples imbued with his

* Report of Father Vota: "Il regnante si persuadeva e gloriava d'aver uniti di fede e di cuore i Calvinisti ed i Luterani, che compongono i suoi vasti dominii."

spirit.* And how many other things may have been left untold?

The university had, on the whole, been founded on principles which have always proved sound. There were only as many professors appointed as were absolutely necessary; but care was taken to elect such as were known to be industrious, and not fond of too frequent interruptions of their work; and, as they were sufficiently paid, the times in which they lived being considered, they were not tempted to gain the favour of their hearers by objectionable means. In this, the advice chiefly acted upon was that of the experienced Samuel Stryck, who himself held one of the first places in the juridical faculty. He was followed by a great number of his pupils from Wittenberg.

The third faculty also proved inspired with the spirit of true knowledge. It was not an accidental and personal antipathy, but an opposition springing from the very nature of the science itself, which caused the controversy between Hofmann, who rationally followed out the path which he had once practically entered, and Dr. Stahl, a bold theorist: the former had great merit in the technical part of the science; but the latter enriched the science itself with new therapeutic methods.

In the memorable discourse with which Paul von Fuchs opened the university, he makes particular

* Yet in his book on German literature, 1780, and in other places, Frederic II refers to the writings of Thomasius.

mention of the close connexion of general science with the concerns of life, and with politics; as for instance, that of mathematics and history with the art of war. "And where," said he, "was the nation which had gained power without the aid of science?" The appropriate symbol of Prussian royalty seems to him to be Pallas, who at the same time presides over the arts of war and of peace.*

We may ask, whether all knowledge can be fostered at universities, or whether there ought not to be other nurseries of science, where knowledge might be advanced without any reference to the instruction of youth? Frederic I, at the suggestion of Leibnitz, made the attempt at least of founding one.

Leibnitz's idea was first of all directed to the promotion of mathematics and physics. He wished to have a society formed after the model of the English and French ones, but in which everything was to be avoided that was merely experimental, or calculated only to gratify curiosity. For this society an observatory was to be built, and a laboratory with a large apparatus to be established, without which the court of a great prince was always incomplete.

He dwelt upon the benefit which the advance of natural philosophy would confer upon the community at large, and upon its close connexion with agricul-

* Thus Cellarius says in the "*Panegyricus Frederico I dictus*," on the occasion of the coronation: "*Ubi jam literæ quam maxime coluntur, in Brandenburgicis putate regionibus, ibi quam plurime victoriarum monumenta sunt.*"

ture, mining, and smelting; at the same time holding up the developement of these branches of knowledge as the best means of preparing the minds of the heathen for the reception of the Gospel.

It was on a trip to Oranienburg, March 1700, that his plan was presented to Frederic, and taken into consideration by him. The new negotiations, which were then in a fair way of success, filled his mind with all sorts of hopes and views, and he gladly entered upon it. He even extended it to another branch of scientific pursuits. Induced, in all likelihood, by the French "Dictionary of the Academy," which had been lately published, he expressed a wish that the new society might devote a similar zeal to the German language, and to the preservation of its purity. The idea was on the whole royal, and at the same time national; it was, in short, that of putting the Germans, with regard to science also, in the way of being at length able to compete with other people. How amply and brilliantly has this wish been fulfilled! The Prussian state could not choose a better ally than the spirit of the German nation progressing in a sound developement.

Frederic I had both judgment and education, and also ambition enough to comprehend ideas of this nature. He devoted to this undertaking also that general benevolence which animated him, a quality which was, however, blended with energy.

In quite a different manner, his queen Sophia Charlotte, who was tinged with the general spirit of Euro-

pean cultivation, exhibited an interest in literature and general science. She not only possessed a very good knowledge of facts, so that she might puzzle many a man of letters; but she also gave herself up to literary pursuits with that ardent zeal which springs from an unquenched thirst of truth. She knew what problems were still to be solved.

It was under her eyes that the theological controversies, which, if they no longer shook the world, continued to occupy men's minds, were multifariously, and by no means superficially discussed.

Sometimes the confessor of king Augustus of Poland, Father Maurice Vota, a most experienced spiritual diplomatist, appeared at the court of Berlin, and indeed, as his memoirs prove, not without a hope of converting the king and queen. He was a Jesuit, and a man of the world; endowed with the most varied knowledge; advanced in years, but of a liveliness of perception which put younger persons to shame. The queen had a great liking for him; she used to invite him with one or the other Protestant preacher,—with one only every time, in order to avoid confusion,—and followed up their arguments with great attention. They might begin to discuss whether St. Peter had been at Rome; then talk over the primacy of the Roman See, the immunities and privileges of the priestly order, until they arrived at the existing differences in the Romish Church, as, for instance, the conduct of the pope in the affair of the Jansenists. One of the principal ideas of Vota was, that a reunion of

the Church, based upon the foundation of the doctrine of the fathers and of the old councils might be hoped for. When Beausobre or Lenfant objected to him, that the Greek fathers also had not always understood the language of the Scripture, and had mingled many extraneous and new Platonic opinions with their doctrines, he got into a holy wrath, which suited him exceedingly well. There is still extant a remarkable letter of the queen on that subject, of which her learned advisers had without doubt furnished her with the matter.* The composition would not be unworthy of a princess of an intellectual turn of mind. It is in a light and pleasant style, although deeply entering into the question.

With as little success, the free thinker Toland assailed her with his obscure and bold doctrines.

On the other hand, the writings of Bayle, especially the "Dictionnaire," which, in spite of its huge folio form and its learned apparatus, was most zealously studied at Charlottenburg, made considerable impression upon her. In the regions of doubt, those oppositions between reason and belief, into which that author leads his readers, the queen began her intercourse with Leibnitz. She was known to feel at once the insufficiency of an argument, and to bring forth the justest objections. It seemed as if at every assertion, the

* Printed in Erman, "*Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de Sophie Charlotte*," p. 247. When Vota hinted, that he had very nearly succeeded in converting the queen, he seems to have forgotten this letter.

whole series of the conclusions which followed from it struck her mind at once, and with perfect distinctness. As she was wont to think, she understood how to put questions. She inquired, it was said, into the cause of causes; Leibnitz saw himself led into researches which he would otherwise have scarcely hit upon. It was on this occasion that he sketched the outlines of his "Theodicee." Too little is left of the queen's own hand-writing to point out the convictions which she had formed in her heart. She was one of those dispositions which, antipathy against all merely outward observances in religion drives rather to the opposite extreme;* but she was charitable and affable, sympathizing with the distresses of others, and calm under her own. She might believe that she was on good terms with her God; she often spoke of the peace of God. It was quite sufficient for her comfort to promenade in the garden at Lietzenburg, which has since been called by her name; to take a drive in the environs of the town; and sometimes to see her native home again. All that she wanted was air and sun, and especially intellectual occupation. If she sat down with her ladies to some female work, which she was not above doing, some one read to her; she had a natural turn for music, and the books from which she played are still extant. But her most peculiar talent,—perhaps that which best suits the mind of woman

* Yet the "Vita Sophiæ Carolinæ" (MS., most likely by Leibnitz himself), says: "Sacrificium piarum precum in spiritu et veritate obtulit."

whenever it attains to its maturity—was that of conversation. Quite the reverse of her husband, who rose with the earliest dawn, and liked to interrupt his day's work by ceremonious pomp, she was fond of long evenings, unaffected dignity, and unrestrained conversation. No flattery, and still less anything coarse, was allowed to come near her. She knew how to distinguish the genuine from the false, and shewed a judgment which might have been wished for literature in a wider field. The men of letters* who surrounded her could never forget the combination of beauty and mind, majesty and good breeding, which were her own. As such she appeared also in that society which constituted the court. She thoroughly knew her people, and would not in her confidential conversations spare their defects. Arrogance, especially when combined with awkwardness, she would repel by coldness; bashful humility she rather drew out and encouraged. She was proud, candid, and full of elegance. With business she never meddled; she only sometimes offered an opinion about personal matters, into which she may have gained an insight, but immediately falls back into her own sphere. Within the latter, the court took somewhat the cue

* Leibnitz is involuntarily reminded of her by the line on Hildegard, the wife of Charlemagne, "*Attamen hanc speciem*"—the finest in the world—"superabant lumina mentis."—"Annales Imperii," i, 108; Larrey, her reader, in the "*History of Louis XIV.*" The finest relic from her papers is a letter to Madame Pölnitz (Erman, 71), which Varnhagen also has quoted.

from her pursuits. It divided, as Toland tells us, its time between studies and amusements. It was precisely the merit of the queen that she called forth intellectual aspirations among the higher ranks of society, which were also very susceptible of them.

And thus the affairs of Prussia, at home and abroad, seemed to thrive most prosperously.

Dohna once extolled the good fortune of the king, in having everything that was praiseworthy and desirable,—excellent troops, money in his treasury, fine country seats to live in, an incomparable wife. The king answered, that he did not, after all, sleep as quietly as people might believe; it was not such an easy matter to balance the various political interests, and to satisfy his covetous courtiers.

But there were still other difficulties besides those hinted at, and they grew more and more apparent.

King Frederic felt happy whilst he was sitting on his throne in the magnificence of his paraphernalia, surrounded by his brothers, the margraves, who appeared with princely pomp; the knights of his order, (which was then worn on a costly chain, hanging down before and behind); the members of his privy council in their embroidered habits of office; the generals and colonels of his army. The officers of his halberdiers were dressed in the old Swiss costume, in white satin, edged with golden fringe. Whoever belonged to the household, wardrobe, and stable, to the cellar, kitchen, bakehouse, pantry, had to make a rich display. Twenty-four trumpeters summoned to din-

ner ; the hunting department, and especially the orchestra, constituted a numerous body. The prince would not dispense with his jester, who was occasionally to tell him, jocularly, what others would keep from him. He liked to see a couple of negroes, and some converted Turk or other, in his service. The blue livery of his household was so plastered with gold lace, that of the red velvet with which it was faced only the outer edge was visible. In the accurate arrangement of these details, and in the preparations for splendid festivals, he himself took interest, and he was told that no one had a greater talent for it. But others, who wished for a substantial progress of the affairs of Brandenburg, did not feel comfortable about this. Now seemed to be realized what had been apprehended from the beginning, that the splendour of the royal crown would endanger the finances of the state. It was once deemed necessary to represent to the king, that the cost of his household had risen to double what it had been during the first years, when so many extraordinary expenses were to be defrayed, and yet no new source of income had been opened. At the court an artificial system prevailed, which at the same time infected the whole state, penetrated into the different councils, and occasioned a quick rise and a sudden fall of the chief officials and their followers.

The principal storms are connected with the names of Dankelmann and Wartenberg.

Without stopping at accidental and ill-authenticated

facts, we may state that Dankelmann, with the authority of an old preceptor, checked the ruling propensity of the prince, urged a certain economy, and kept as much as possible the finances in order, but that Wartenberg,* on the contrary, an able pliant courtier, who had risen in the personal service of the monarch, had rather fostered those propensities, and favoured every sort of extravagance.

Thence it happened, that all praiseworthy endeavours, which even sprang sometimes from grand ideas, were attended with a certain feeling of insecurity; people incessantly felt the ground on which they stood trembling beneath their feet.

The attempt to let out the demesnes on hereditary leases affords a remarkable example of the manner in which things were done; how comprehensive plans were conceived, and with what recklessness it was tried to carry them out, until at last the whole scheme failed, owing to the confusion which everywhere prevailed. I must briefly mention that plan, as those administrative movements belonged to the peculiar nature of the rising state.

The great elector, besides the attention which he

* Besser enumerates his offices:—First chamberlain, prime minister, director general of the household, chief of all the offices belonging to the privy purse, hereditary postmaster-general, high-marshal of Prussia, knight and chancellor of the order of the Black Eagle, and also protector of all the royal academies. "Great lords," he says, "have two sorts of servants, some for business, and some for their persons; but here the two are combined in the count alone."—Besser's Writings, p. 167.

paid to the introduction of the excise, had devoted considerable care to the husbanding of the demesnes, and had, after manifold contradictory attempts, at length returned to that peculiar mode of leasing them out which was then called an "Arende." The same system was followed also under his heir, and indeed with the best success; the revenue of the demesnes in the districts of Magdeburg being more than doubled from 1683 to 1702. Frederic William, however, had not been quite satisfied with that method; the spirit of improved political economy, having once been awakened, contented itself so much the less with the results which had been gained, as the expenditure daily increased.

Then, at once, from amidst the administrative body, aman arose who offered to draw a much greater revenue from the demesnes, if it were only allowed to manage them in a different manner.

This was Christian Frederic Luben of Wulfen, who had formerly held an employment in the financial chamber of the Electoral March, and had, among its records, fallen upon older plans, dating from the sixteenth century, which had been carried out elsewhere. He was a man of aspiring ambition, no stranger to the civil war of conflicting intrigue at that court, but, at the same time, endowed with a genuine vein of talent for the conception of vast ideas, and the carrying out of new institutions.*

* König, Berlin, iii, 167, 184.

In the year 1700, when all novelties met with a favourable reception, he presented a plan of letting out all the demesne lands on hereditary leases, leaving first the great farms, which, until now, had been held at will, to peasants and cottagers, for an hereditary rent, to be managed as they pleased. This was perhaps not advisable for a nobleman, who could superintend all of it himself ; but it was certainly advantageous for a prince who possessed many and distant estates. He calculated, that a farm which was now valued at five hundred dollars' rent, did not, after the deductions with which the prince was charged, bring in more than half that sum, but that if it were let out to different persons it might produce more than six hundred dollars net. Yet his ideas were not merely financial; they indicate already an agricultural legislation which was afterwards adopted from quite different motives. He wished to free the peasants, who depended upon the royal farms and estates, from those heavy servitudes which they owed to the farmers, and to change their personal services into a money payment. He was of opinion, that, in consequence of the establishment of new peasant-farms, the country would be peopled, youth would devote itself to agriculture, and, perhaps, a great number of foreigners be attracted ; and that the glory of the ruler, and the safety of the land, consisted in the number of subjects, as no enemy would venture any more to enter a territory which was everywhere occupied by proprietors.

Plans like this were acceptable to the well-meaning

disposition of the prince. It was precisely his intention to found a strong and brilliant royalty on the vigorous developement of all the energies of the state. The privy council had no objections to make, having always advised the attracting of good husbandmen and substantial people into the country. Count Wartenberg most zealously took the matter in hand. After he had consulted with experienced men, the resolution was formed to institute a commission, which, independent of every other authority, had to carry out the plan: Luben was one of the members, and they pledged themselves to make out a certain surplus. On the second of April 1701, an ordinance was published, which fixed upon the estates in the Old March, where the first experiment of the new management was to be made. It announced, to the subjects, relief from the burthens of agricultural servitude, and called upon those, who were able to give security, to apply for an hereditary lease.

And the beginning, which was made on seven estates of the Old March, afforded the best results. Buildings and stock were sold for good prices; the fixed hereditary rent exceeded the surplus which had been promised. After the king had, in the autumn of 1701, himself inspected the new arrangement, and approved of it, the attempt was made to introduce it also into the other provinces, in the year 1702,—first into the Middle March and the territory of Magdeburg; but here a resistance arose, which could have scarcely been expected in that state.

The two fiscal chambers of Halle and of Berlin, convinced that they had until now fulfilled their duty, and done as much as had been possible, were indignant, that, within their own districts, an authority was exercised independent of theirs, and acting in a manner diametrically opposed to all their notions. With the greatest difficulty they had put those farm-houses and out-buildings into good repair, which Luben now hastened to sell. They were still burthened with particular debts, which they had intended to discharge by gradually increasing the revenue after the methods hitherto in use, and they had now to see that such a surplus was at once gained by factitious means, and expended for different objects. The chamber of Halle refused to treat as royal servants the inferior officers appointed by Luben, would not listen to their remonstrances, and addressed no ordinances to them. Luben, who went farther and farther, directed the hereditary lessees not to pay into the exchequer of the chambers a larger amount than that which these had received in the latter years of the *Arende*; the chamber, on the other hand, claimed also the surplus which the hereditary lessees had promised, and exacted it by executions.

It would be mistaking the nature of Prussian functionaries, to see in them the mere passive instruments of a will not their own. They are wont to form general practical maxims, which they pertinaciously cling to when they have once tried them. Here a war, as it were, broke out between two authorities, one of

which was in possession of the regular power of office, whilst the other only acted on that of an extraordinary commission. An active correspondence was carried on; a commission was appointed to inquire into the matter; extensive informations were procured from the districts where the altered system was already in operation. The result was, that the new management was confirmed, and the plan of introducing hereditary leases extended also over all the other provinces.

It was not then the fashion to spare people who were in the opposition. All the members of the fiscal chambers, as well of Halle and Berlin, as of Halberstadt, who had opposed the plan of Luben, were dismissed the service, and those only retained who accommodated themselves to the new state of things. The Aulic chamber, in which Luben himself had now been installed, undertook the carrying out of the whole project. What, until now, had rather been an extraordinary experiment, was, in the year 1704, raised into a regular system. The arrangement at first proceeded without difficulty.

In the years 1704 and 1705, there were in the Electoral March twelve great estates, and a certain number of farms, let out on hereditary leases. In the district of Magdeburg, the domains thus to be administered were distributed among the commissioners, and all was settled in the year 1706, with the exception of a few appurtenances. Here, and in the district of Halberstadt, in the neighbourhood of country towns and large villages, it was not difficult to find

were expended in the first century. In this manner more than 400,000 dollars can be accounted for.

Thus much the surplus alone from the produce of the demesnes within the first ten years had amounted to; but besides, at least an equal sum had been brought in by fines, the sale of stock, and the securities. If we inquire what became of this money, the accounts leave no doubt on the subject: they served, for the greater part, to discharge the debts of the court. I find that in one year, 1707 to 1708, more than 100,000 dollars were drawn from hereditary leases to be expended for this purpose.

This was principally effected by an arrangement, owing to which the director-general of the demesne lands, Count Wingenstein, who in the year 1704 had turned the scale in favour of the hereditary leases, was at the same time high-marshal, and presided over the exchequer of the court. What he wanted as high-marshal he procured in his quality of director of the demesne. The functionaries complained, that he had neither allowed the accounts of the household, nor those of the provincial administrations, to be duly audited.

It must certainly have exercised a most pernicious influence upon the whole measure, that revenue was made the chief point. The demands were carried too high, the trustworthiness of the lessees was not sufficiently considered.

In the district of Magdeburg, where things had been best and most easily managed, many hereditary

lessees proved unable to pay, and had to be reminded of their obligations by compulsory means. In the Electoral March, the chamber was very soon obliged to renounce the surplus which had been promised. In the New March, the lessees refused to pay, because they had been rated too high: the chamber was unable to satisfy the court. In Pomerania, it happened that the commissioners, merely in order to get lessees, had granted exemptions from excise or contributions,—once even, from ordinary and extraordinary taxes; and as this could not be allowed to last, the lessees also refused to fulfil their engagements. In Cleves, where Luben in 1709 began his operations with great hopes, he met with such resistance from the lords of the manors (Drosten), who saw their monopolies endangered; from the bailiffs and stewards, who feared for their offices; in short, from all who had been interested in the old administration of the country, and even from those who owed the servitude, but preferred to pay it in kind,—at least, when it was to be done on a fixed day,—and thus the plan could not be carried out.

How far short fell these results of the expectation, which had once been entertained of this project! The chambers all but dissolved, and their treasuries in the greatest confusion; large sums gone, none of the promised advantages realized; no increase of tillage or of population!

It was not only the insolvency of a fire assurance, that Count Wittgenstein was charged with; his chief

opponent, Bogeslaus von Kameke, attacked the whole of his administration, and, at the same time, Count Wartenberg, his patron and protector, who had made the hereditary leases his own cause.*

The reasons which he alleged were irresistible, owing to the evident confusion of affairs. All at once, (certainly, however, owing to the co-operation of other causes), a complete reaction was seen in court and state; Luben was recalled, and removed; Wittgenstein sent as a prisoner to Spandau; Wartenberg, also (although the king very reluctantly agreed to it,) was dismissed the service.

For it was in the spirit of the time, that unsuccessful undertakings, whether in domestic or in foreign policy, were avenged upon their chief projectors, who were considered as personally responsible for them.

As the greater part of the concluded leases had not yet received the royal assent, the government did not hesitate to revoke the whole system of hereditary leases.

But it may be easily imagined into what confusion the several provinces, a part of the private estates, and also the royal treasuries, were thereby thrown. When a severe winter in the province of Prussia was followed by a famine, no means for relief were available: from commercial reasons government were even afraid to prohibit the exportation of corn; and a disease broke out which nearly depopulated Lithuania.

* Kameke's opinion is dated November 1710.

In a word, a project important in itself turned out to be a complete failure, and only engendered ruin and destruction.

In general, we have seen, that, during this reign, also, enlarged ideas were entertained. As the Academy of Sciences was intended to foster the literary genius of the nation,—so, the Academy of Fine Arts, which had been founded, was thought to be a nursery of architecture, especially, for the whole of Germany. An able judge, who had also seen much of the world, assures us, that nowhere had he found more competent teachers and more zealous pupils.* Care was taken to ennoble manufacturers by artistical studies.

The French men of letters, who had found an asylum at Berlin, carried on the defensive war against the Romish element in the learning of the century of Louis XIV. In the meanwhile, the Germans struck out new paths in the fields of Protestant philosophy, which had attained to so much the greater security. This benefit at least was derived from the extravagance of the court, that trade, especially in those branches of it which supplied articles of luxury, was increased. For the good of commerce, some quite indispensable enactments were made; as for instance, regulations of exchange, which cut off all those pleas

* Laurence Beger, "*Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*": "*Neque in Belgico neque in Gallia, neque in ipsa artium parente Italia et Roma majorem vel artificum excellentiam, vel disciplinorum solertiam deprehendi.*"

hitherto raised against laws of this description, and which met with general approbation. It was intended to establish a Board of Trade, which was likewise to act as a commercial judicature, and in the establishment of manufactures had to see that everything was creditably executed.* But the most remarkable measure was the attempt at raising a militia by the side of the regular troops.

In the first place, the sons of peasants on the royal estates, who were unmarried, and under forty years of age, were to be trained to arms. After they had once been freed from the apprehension of having to march along with the army into war, the exercise—which was superintended by non-commissioned officers of the line, who went round the different villages, and drilled them on summer evenings—afforded them much amusement. Once a month, they met from the whole district. The authorities of the districts supplied uniforms and arms, and kept them in store. It was hoped that with trained bands of this description, invasions, as that of the Swedes in 1657, would be made for ever impossible : every district and every village would defend itself. In times of urgent necessity, they might, at least within the country itself, be combined also with the regular troops.† If in the

* Marperger's "Geographische Beschryvinge," etc. Verdaalt door van der Aa; 191, 280.

† In the regulations it is stated, that the hope might be entertained, that "such a trained peasant, of whose like the greater part of the regular troops consisted, would, in consideration of his own

royal decrees, this new obligation of the peasants is founded on the abolition of the agricultural servitudes, we may trace the connexion between this institution and the change in the agricultural relations. There were popular elements stirring in this state, which might already then have led to quite a different developement of domestic affairs, if the times had been more favourable, or the administration more judicious. But the disorder of the finances ; the over-rating of the resources, which afterwards fell very short of what had been anticipated ; want of stable and clearly defined forms ; the fluctuations of parties ; and at last also, visitations over which man had no control, combined to throw every thing into utter confusion.

The principal conditions of power and of prosperity were still wanting. The state had not yet a settled political existence. While the domestic government of Frederic I met with opposition, his conduct of foreign affairs had not a lesser one to encounter.

At the time when his armies were assisting at the subjugation of the rich provinces of Lower Hungary, he was, nevertheless, obliged, in fulfilment of the promise which he had made as prince, to give up that district of Schwiebus which had been the price of the alliance of his father. The imperial ministers were

interests, make at least as good a stand as one who had been enlisted in foreign provinces by force, and contrary to his wishes."—Gansange, "The Military Organization of Brandenburg in 1440, 1640, and 1740," p. 209. Toland was astonished at the fine bearing of this militia.

told, that, by this restoration, the claims on Silesia were revived;* but this was too distant a contingency to prevent them from availing themselves of the immediate advantage which resulted from that secret stipulation.

While, moreover, in the war of the Spanish succession, the cause of the allies was defended with so much energy, that of the country itself was very much advanced. It was fortunate that the rights in Neufchatel had already been acquired, and were independent of the Orange inheritance. Concerning the latter itself, the most unpleasant dissensions arose with the nearest allies.

The manner also in which the king participated in the war, sending only little divisions into the field, met with censure; for, it was said, that thus it happened that the new crown never attained to that consideration which a concentrated military force would have procured for it. When the treaties of peace were negotiated, Brandenburg was neglected, as well in form as in fact.†

* Pufendorf, "Fridericus III," parag. 7 :—"Prætensionem in tres ducatus dimidiam fere Silesiam complexos, serius ocus fuisse vindicandam ista transactione abolitam."

† From the memorandum of the Prussian resident in England, Bonet, quoted by Lamberty, vii, 515, it is seen, that hopes were entertained at the court of Berlin, as late as 1712, of bringing about a peace, by which the empire might be for ever secured, Strasburg restored to the Germans, and the claims of all the parties acknowledged, when at once the unexpected change in the policy of England took place.

And yet the military resources of the country were so completely taken up by the war in the west, that in the east it appeared almost unarmed against imminent dangers. It was most deeply felt, that it was once necessary to cajole Charles XII, instead of dictating to him at the head of an army; and that, even in the year 1711, the passage of Russo-Saxon troops had to be submitted to.

The crown prince especially felt very unhappy at it. He also complained of the successors of Wartenberg: he thought that he had been intentionally set aside, even ill used by them; and, above all, he condemned their policy,—the domestic one as ruinous, the foreign as cowardly and hopeless.

It was a scene of dramatic contrast, when Frederic I, not yet much advanced in years, but, for a long time suffering from disease in the chest, one day in the beginning of the year 1713, appeared in such a weak state, that apprehensions were entertained for his life. The crown prince, who never speaks of his father but with the most filial respect, was touched to his heart; “but,” says he, “I could not help laughing within myself, when I remarked the confusion of the ministers.”

Once more Frederic I enjoyed a moment of satisfaction, when, after having slightly rallied, he stepped to the window, and was received by the assembled crowd, which had collected from anxiety on account of his life, with loud and hearty shouts of joy. For, as already mentioned, he was beloved as few of his pre-

decessors and successors were. His rule and his natural gentleness were agreeable to the people: if faults had been committed, his subjects did not lay them to the mind, and still less to the intentions of the sovereign. But they possessed him only one moment longer. Frederic died February 25, 1713, and the whole system which had existed under him, was then at an end.*

THE EARLIER YEARS OF KING FREDERIC WILLIAM I.

Frederic William, who succeeded, began his reign with the resolution of managing matters differently.

"Tell the prince of Anhalt," he says, in his first letter after his accession which we have seen, "that I am the minister of finances and the field marshal of the king of Prussia, and that will keep the king of Prussia afloat!" Words which characterize the combination of rule and labour in which he intended henceforth to live, and, at the same time, the tendencies which he had traced out for his acts.

He had been in the school "where great men are forming, and where princes are only estimated at the value which they deserve by their bravery and good command,"—in the camp of the Netherlands. Marl-

* Manuscript memorandum of a contemporary:—"Il est certain, qu'il est mort la nuit du vendredi au samedi qui était le 25 (sooner therefore than was believed): aussitôt qu'il fust expiré, le nouveau monarch monta à cheval et fit mettre les sceaux à plusieurs des maisons royales. La mort du roi fut déclarée aussitôt qu'il fut de retour."

borough, whose words these are, and who saw the prince sometimes, treated all the outward attributes of dignity as the playthings of a childish fancy, and estimated the power of a prince merely by the number of troops which he was able to keep. Nobody could have lent a more ready ear to maxims of this kind than did the crown prince of Prussia. How often would he reproach the ministers of his father, that they thought they could gain something from the European powers with the pen, which could only be enforced by the sword. He was convinced that he would have in Europe as much consideration only, as the army which he could send into the field could procure him.

But, as it has been remarked, with regard to science and the fine arts, that great progress could not be made without attention to details and to trifling matters—thus with him political thought was combined with a quite extraordinary fondness for the minutiae of service. There was a received tradition in the old Prussian army, that the prince had at his own expense, without the knowledge, or at least without the open sanction of the king, raised a battalion in Mittenwalde, composed of able officers and fine men, whom the old prince of Anhalt had singly enlisted and sent to him. Here he had amused himself in drilling them in the manual exercise, which at that time had been brought into use in the Netherlands. The very act of giving the word of command seemed to afford him pleasure; he despised the railings which

he had to suffer for it. He would not leave it off, even when he had become king. His battalion was the nucleus of the great regiment at Potsdam, in which he tried to realize his military ideal.

To these two matters, the increase and good organization of the army, he paid his chief attention from the very beginning of his reign. Immediately, in the first month, he changed everything that concerned the food, clothing, and lodging of the troops. He says himself,—and every one allows it to be true,—that he has shewn paternal care for his soldiers. Soon afterwards his articles of war were issued, newly arranged from those given by the great elector. They contain the strictest regulations. Whoever opposes the official command of a corporal, if only with words, is to be punished by being made to run the gauntlet; but, if he should be guilty of actual resistance, his life is to be forfeited. These articles are based upon the old regulations of the German Landsknechts, and sometimes remind us still of them. But what a change from the loose strolling mode of life of those bands to the rigid subordination of permanent regiments, which were formed into compact bodies like so many corporations!

Frederic William entertained not the least doubt that all his subjects were bound to serve him in an army which existed merely for their own protection, and for the good of "country and people;"* yet he

* Edict in Mylius, i, number xv.

wished not to hear anything of a national militia,* he forbade even the use of the word "militia." Only a standing army, ever ready to throw the weight of the Prussian sword into the scale of European affairs, seemed to him worth anything. In his very first year he formed seven new regiments.

Pursuing this exclusive object, he considered every sort of expenditure as mere waste of money.

Besides this, a court like that of his father was a thing quite repugnant to his natural turn of mind; grooms of the stole, gentlemen ushers, and many other officials of the court, were at once dismissed in a body, and those who were retained were subjected to considerable retrenchments.

Yet we find in letters of that time that the latter did not complain so bitterly as might have been expected, inasmuch as they also were now relieved from very heavy expenses. Only some few might indeed have been very hardly used in that matter; as for instance, the master of ceremonies, Besser, who had devoted all his life to the science of court etiquette, and whose name is said to have been the first which was struck from the list of salaries. Secretly informed of this fact, he presented a petition to the king, in which he exhibited a certain sort of pride; but his

* The militia was abolished March 9, 1713. Under Frederic I already conflicts had arisen between the management of the recruiting for the army and that of the enlisting for the militia, the country not being peopled enough to admit of both systems at the same time.

majesty threw it into the fire, having no more occasion for a master of ceremonies. Besser was obliged to put down his carriage and horses, and to live in an humble style, until at last he was fortunate enough to get a place in Saxony which was worthy of his talents.*

At the reduction, or rather abolition, of the household, there arose only the question, how the town, the trade of which to a great extent depended upon it, would be able to hold out, and to defray those burthens which were laid upon it? The innovations of the king gave rise to general complaints. Many, who were in danger of losing their livelihood, thought of leaving the country. They listened to the proposals which were made to them from other quarters, for instance, from Saxony.†

The king replaced the expenditure of the court by that for the wants of his army, which he wished to be entirely supplied by the produce of home industry. In general, he followed the principles of the system of Colbert, then in vogue all over Europe, and he prohibited the exportation of wool, and also the importation of foreign cloth. I have heard the question

* König, "Life of Besser," xciii. I have besides found the following general notice, MS.: "Le roi congédia tous les tapissiers de hautelisse, qui étaient gagés du roi, les vernisseurs, peintres, sculpteurs, architectes, en général tous les artistes, qui tiraient des gros gages. . . . Toutes ces gens-là quittèrent Berlin, ce qui y fit un vide considérable."

† Lettre de M. Lecoq au roi de Pologne 1713, June 17.— "Comme rien n'est plus sensible, que de se voir ôter le pain, tout le monde crie hautement et sans menagement."

raised, whether it would not have been better to procure the cloth from foreign manufacturers, as in former times, and, on the other hand, to promote the production of wool in the country. I will not discuss whether the country would have been the richer for it or not. It would have fallen into the power of those commercial agencies which govern the world, without being able to oppose to them any commerce of its own. This would have been at variance with those views of independence which were at the bottom of all the general ideas thus received in the state. One of the former ministers,—who enjoyed, however, very little favour with the new king,—gained the merit of rendering this plan practicable. The home manufacture was still very insufficient with regard to all that belonged to the clothing of the troops ; and it was already an advantage, that, at first, the productions at least of the weavers were employed for the use of the army. But it was soon evident that this would not lead to the desired result. The workmanship was bad, the prices by far too high for the quality, and it was found necessary to take more energetic steps to force on manufactures. That minister, the receiver-general Kraut, attracted more skilful workmen, and succeeded in establishing a proportion between the price of the work and the money which could be afforded for it.

After some time, the purpose was effected of producing cloth which was at the same time fine and cheap, and not only drove the foreign goods from the

home market, but also found a ready sale in foreign parts. The store-house (*Lagerhaus*) for thus the institution was called, employed thousands of industrious hands in the whole country.*

Much as it may seem at variance with received opinions, yet we venture to assert, that the keeping up a considerable army was beneficial, as well to trade, as to the progress of the towns in this stage of their existence.

Without the garrisons, the revenue of the excise, on which the whole financial system rested, could not have been thought of.

Frederic William left it in the main as he found it; but he raised the duties on foreign goods in favour of home manufactures. He was the first who brought protectional duties and the excise into that close connexion with each other, in which they have ever afterwards continued in Prussia. He professed the maxim, that the real philosopher's stone, was to keep back one's money in one's own country.

No more would the peasants have been able to pay their contributions, had not the consumption of provisions been increased by the army.

The furnishing of supplies in kind, as was still done for the use of the cavalry, was contrary to the ideas of Frederic William. Whilst quartering the garrisons in the towns, he changed the former rations into a money payment, to be raised together with the contributions.

* König, Berlin, i, 23; ii, 185.

The latter he took care to simplify as much as possible. He abolished all those taxes which were raised for special purposes, as for the legations,—for the building of the castle, etc. etc.,—and made the productiveness of the soil the chief basis of a tax, from which all the details were excluded. It was one of his principal cares, during the earlier years of his reign, to classify the land after its quality, and then to have the contributions of every one fixed according to the class to which his property belonged. A permanent assessment of the rate seemed to him as necessary for the administration of the public treasuries, as for individuals and private households.

And, at the same time, he devoted himself zealously to the management of his demesnes.

We already hinted what share he had in the system of hereditary leases;—he considered it as one of his first cares to resume the demesne lands which, at his accession, were still in the hands of the hereditary lessees. The fees which they had already paid, he caused to be restored to them; but they were immediately to quit, with all their goods and chattels, the estates which were his, belonging to him by every divine and human right. The daringness of this attempt gave him occasion to renew in the strongest terms an old regulation of his house, according to which, lands inherited from his ancestors, must not be alienated; and to extend it to all of the estates and revenues which had been acquired since, or might hereafter be acquired. The king restored everywhere

the system of leases at will, and enjoyed the pleasure of seeing his income increased by it. Now only had people learned to calculate the proportion of the seed to the produce, according to differences of soil, and seen, from experience, what a field was able to bear. As the hereditary lessees, who now rented again at will, outbade each other, the royal estates are said to have brought in one-third more than their former rent, and that the farmers were obliged to exert themselves to make both ends meet, tended generally to a better mode of husbandry. The leases were always for six years, and the king ordered the strictest vigilance to be used in the renewal. The president of the Provincial Chamber, who had the superintendence of the royal estates, had to visit them, and, as soon as the snow melted, to ascertain whether the number and nature of the acres agreed with the estimates; if it were necessary, he had to cause a new survey to be made, and to procure in person such accurate information that he could not be imposed upon, either by the tenants, or by his councillors. Of every improvement, previous estimates were to be made, and then care was to be taken not to exceed them by the value of a farthing. The tenant was bound by his security, and was never to be allowed additional time for payment. The Aulic Chamber, which had played such a great part in the affair of the hereditary leases, was broken up, and there was instituted a general board for the management of the demesne lands, to which all the local chambers were subordinate. But the

king himself exercised a sort of superintendence which extended to every department, and kept the officials on the alert, rather by intimidation than by encouragement. He had no less talent for agriculture than for military service, and had acquired as much knowledge of detail in the former, as he possessed in the latter.

It was then said,—a thing which would not have been expected from Frederick William I,—that a passage from an old Greek classic had, in this respect, made great impression upon him when a boy,—a chapter of Xenophon, in which it is stated of the Persian king, that he cared as much for agriculture as for war; that he travelled through the different provinces of his dominions, (or had them visited,) dispensing rewards and punishments according to the condition in which he found them. Thus he also was engaged in this double field of action.

But what gave to his state quite a particular stamp, was the homely thrifty manner in which he managed it, as the father of a family would his household; the constant balancing of income and expenditure, even in petty details; the strict discipline of the officials, who kept each other in check. As of Pope Sixtus, thus also of king Frederic William,—account-books are extant, which he kept in his youth. They evince as great a natural taste for order and economy, only with a marked preponderance of military expenses, from his earliest years.* Count Dohna, his tutor,

* Account-book, 1698-1702. In Rödénbeck Beiträge (materials).

has the credit of having fostered in him these qualities, which he possessed himself. Nature and education in him were still more confirmed by his having before his eyes the very reverse of those maxims, in that reckless extravagance which threatened ruin under Frederic I.

"On my accession," Frederic William said once on a later occasion, "I formed a plan which rests on economy and *menage*," (for thus he calls financial thriftiness). In his first measures, he was aided chiefly by the Privy Councillor Creuz, whom he had known as a trust-worthy man, when he was Judge-Advocate of his regiment, and who acted as Comptroller-General, long before he was appointed as such.*

Frederic William had the good fortune to begin his reign with a considerable acquisition in the west, and soon afterwards to add to this one of the greatest and most important in the east of his country.

With regard to the former, an unconditional participation in the Grand Alliance would never have achieved it; but when it broke up, and the French claims got, by the co-operation of the English, a weight which the arms of Louis XIV had not been able to give them, in the conflict of the two hostile

* Manteuffel, 1713, April 9: "Toutes les affaires domestiques, de même que celles de finance, passent par les mains de Creuz, mais il fait la fonction d'un contrôleur-général, et c'est justement ce qui lui donne le plus de crédit." Count Dohna might be considered as prime minister, Creuz and Ilgen, as the principal managers.

pretensions to the Spanish monarchy, a right could be urged, which rested on a debt of the old dynasty. Louis XIV, in the name of Philip V and the emperor, consented to concede to Prussia the district of Upper Guelderland, which was a most welcome acquisition, on account of the support which it afforded to the combined possessions of Cleves and Westphalia. The merit of this success was principally owing to Frederic I. The negociation had been chiefly conducted by Ilgen, one of the few men who gained an independent fame in the management of the foreign affairs of Prussia, which otherwise were almost always taken in hand by the prince himself. Long practice had made this clever and industrious man perfectly acquainted with the relations and interests of the whole political world, with which he was as familiar as if they were his own, and which he now pursued with so much judgment, activity, and patience, that he would succeed even in the most difficult undertakings. Ilgen, as well as Anhalt and Grumbkow, belonged to those who had attached themselves to Frederic William already before his accession : the others, partly because they had been treated with neglect,—Ilgen, of his own free impulse, and from foresight. He had the pleasure of concluding for the king,—for now only positive declarations were obtained from the court of Vienna,—on the fiftieth day of his reign, the peace of Utrecht, which was as advantageous for the territorial affairs as could have been expected, and gained to the royal

dignity general acknowledgment in the west of Europe also. But now arose another question, which was, if not of greater difficulty, yet of much vaster importance for the independent position of the Brandenburg-Prussian power in the complicated affairs of the North, and the result of which was of so much consequence, that it is incumbent upon us to treat of it more fully.

It had been the policy of Frederic I, to take as little share as possible in the northern war, as he should otherwise never have been able to employ his forces on other points. In his treaties with the western allies he insisted always upon the promise, that he should be indemnified, in case he should be annoyed or injured in that quarter. It was principally owing to him, that these two sides of European affairs were kept separate.

In consequence of the expedition of Charles XII against Russia, the whole face of the North was changed. The Swedish provinces on the German side of the Baltic, from which, until then, the aggressions had been made, were attacked by the northern allies, and the fate which had befallen the provinces which had once been Polish, now threatened also those belonging to the German empire.

In order to prevent the mischief which might arise from such an event, a convention of those European and German powers, which were still allied against France, was concluded in the summer of the year 1710,—according to which, the Swedish possessions in

Germany were to be neutral ; no hostility was to be carried on from their territories, nor to be allowed against them. The empire agreed to this resolution, and a considerable army was to be employed to enforce it.

It was hoped the king of Sweden, who had been carried by his destiny into distant parts, would be satisfied with an arrangement which secured his German provinces against the superior power of his enemies. This might have been expected of any other man but Charles XII.

Far from the theatre of the world, his fancy revelled in the boldest combinations of renewed influence upon general politics : he would not resign the right of employing the troops, which were stationed in his German provinces, for the attack against Poland and Prussia, which he intended to begin from Turkey. He declared that he could not by any means consider himself bound by treaties which had been concluded contrary to his will ; he reserved to himself the liberty of using against his enemies the means which God had given, wherever, and in whatever manner he might choose, and without restriction.*

But it also followed thence, that the same liberty

* "*Declaratio regis Sueciæ ad urbem Benderam, 30th Nov. 1710. Sese nulla ratione teneri posse legibus istius fœderis, ipso invito, et vix citra partium studium, initi,—sibi reservatam velle omni modo ac nullis legibus circumscriptam facultatem, utendi mediis et viribus, quas Deus concessit, adversus hostes suos, ubicumque locorum, et quocumque tempore, usus et ratio belli id poposcerit.*"

views with such energy as to exclude every other consideration : the country must first of all be able to defend itself.

The events of the period were not fraught with the dangers of the moment only, but they also brought to mind in what an unsatisfactory position things were in general.

Hitherto the unpleasantness only had been felt of having as a neighbour a power like that of Sweden, which wanted, and therefore sought for war ; but matters were not less critical, now that it was no more able to protect itself. People had gradually accustomed themselves to Swedish neighbours, but how could Brandenburg consent that Saxo-Poland, as it had really once been agreed in a preliminary treaty, or even powerful Russia, should get possession of the mouths of the Oder, and of this well-situated coast ? The tracts of country to which the margraves had acquired a right, and which the electors had so earnestly claimed, were not now to be suffered by the kings to fall entirely into the hands of foreigners.

From the empire, however much it was itself concerned by this affair, Frederic William found no support : to plunge into war himself, or to join one or the other party, for which there was, after all, no justifiable plea, he felt the greatest reluctance.

Affairs then came to the following issue, although only after many perplexities. The heir presumptive of the crown of Sweden, Duke Charles Frederic of Holstein Gottorp, attacked by one of the northern con-

federates, the king of Denmark, in his Holstein dominions, and threatened with losing them for ever, applied for help to Prussia, which, as he stated, next to the emperor, had most interest in the maintenance of law and order in the empire, and for which, more than for any other power, it was of importance that in the north a balance should be established. His ministers, Basswitz and Görtz, a couple of men famous for the daringness of their designs, and the shrewdness with which they pursued them, did their utmost to enlist the sympathies of Frederic William in the cause of their prince, that he might uphold him, as well in the land of his inheritance, as in his hopes of the reversion of Sweden.

King Frederic William did not show himself averse to the proposals which were made to him ; but he said, that he had a thorn in his foot, which dated from the peace of Westphalia, and must be first extracted. How, under such circumstances, could he help remembering the old rights of his house to Pomerania ?

The two ministers saw clearly, that if the duke, whom they already considered as the future king of Sweden, wanted to be supported by Brandenburg, some substantial concessions must be made to the latter. They did not scruple to offer to the king the possession of Stettin, should the prince ever succeed to the Swedish crown. With regard to the actual differences, they proposed the joint occupation of the Pomeranian fortresses by Holstein and Prussian troops. They at the same time explicitly stated that it was

already a step towards taking possession, if the king could place troops in Stettin, and they engaged to obtain the consent of the crown of Sweden.

On this basis a treaty was concluded, June 22nd, 1713, between Prussia and Holstein, according to which Stettin and Wismar were to be jointly occupied by the two contracting parties. Lower Pomerania in general was to be protected from hostile aggression; and the restoration of the duke to his lost countries was to be effected by all suitable means.*

This was a treaty in which, as it was thought, co-operation of the crown of Sweden might have been reckoned upon, inasmuch as the latter was everywhere surrounded by difficulties. An ally like the king of Prussia,—who, it is true, could not have allowed Pomerania to remain as heretofore a base of warlike operations,—might after all have proved very useful during peace. If afterwards Holstein had been annexed to it, it would not have lost anything in extent of territory.

But in the meanwhile the northern confederates also became aware of the advantage which might accrue to them from the accession of the rapidly risen Prussian power, so they likewise made approaches to that court. Peter I, who, during a visit there, as he expressed it in his own style, “sniffed the scent of the Swedes,” shewed, on his part, much willingness to allow the town and district of Stettin to revert to Prussia.

* Dumont, viii, 1, 293, art. I, IV.

Thus that Lower Pomerania, which had once been disputed to the great elector, as it were, by the common consent of western Europe, was now offered to his grandson from the opposite quarter. It seemed to be quite a sensible expedient to have the town in the first place occupied by neutral troops, whereupon it might pass into the possession of Prussia. Pomerania at least would by this means have been free from all troubles.

But everybody did not agree to it, nor think it acceptable. The Swedish governor of Stettin, General Meierfeld, who found it incompatible with his duty to acknowledge a treaty of the heir-presumptive, preferred to stand a formal siege, and to be obliged by the arms of the northern confederates to capitulate.

The king of Prussia had been in the most pressing manner called upon to support them in it, and nothing would have been more easy for him, than, by making their alliance, to get hold of the whole of the province. But Frederic William was wont to act in foreign affairs with conscientious and cautious consideration. His ministers represented to him, that, although it was the duty of a great prince to promote to the utmost the good of his house and his people, yet that it must be done only so far as was consistent with right, and Prussia was not engaged in war with Sweden. Frederic William expressed himself with a spirited outburst of the highest feeling of political morality: he would, he said, have nothing to do with the business.

On the other hand, after General Meierfeld had been compelled to that capitulation, he agreed to other proposals more in accordance with the neutral position which he had hitherto maintained.

It was a special condition of the capitulation that the town should be given up to Holstein and Prussian troops. The northern allies declared that they were ready to grant this, if the expenses of the war, which they estimated at 400,000 dollars, were repaid them; and this sum king Frederic William undertook to advance, not on the uncertain expectation of keeping the place, but on the positive guarantee that the money should be restored, whenever he had to give up the fortress.

The Swedish governor-general, Maurice Vellingk, who was specially empowered by his king to conclude treaties on urgent occasions in his name, particularly with Prussia, settled this affair with him. The king did not hesitate in the least, as it was his opinion that the money which he had paid was of far less value than the advantage which he procured for the country by ridding it of the armed force of the confederates. But to complete the arrangement, he submitted also to a political obligation. The confederates promised to abstain from any further hostilities against Pomerania, and he, on his side, engaged to take care that none should be exercised against them from Pomerania. Under these conditions, Stettin and its dependencies, together with the country as far as the river Peene,

were entrusted to his keeping, as a sequestration until peace should be made.

It is easy to see, how consistently one thing follows from the other; the king of Prussia undertook himself what would have been impossible to the empire, namely, to rescue Pomerania from the vicissitudes of the northern war; yet it cannot be denied, that the compromise presents also one very extraordinary feature on the other side.

The sovereign to whom Lower Pomerania belonged, king Charles XII, had not been consulted in the affair. It is true, he could not be consulted, as he had chosen a remote and inaccessible exile for himself. But since he had not given his consent, could the treaty be considered as legal?

Two points are here to be closely distinguished.

The heir-presumptive of the crown, in order to save the whole, agreed to give up a part, and to leave the king of Prussia the future possession of Stettin. To this the northern confederates consented: the Prussian interests imperatively required it, and this expectation had been one of the motives of Frederic in embarking at all in the affair. It is evident that Charles XII could not be bound by any law or custom of the world to approve of a stipulation of this description.

But it was far otherwise with the treaty of sequestration, as it actually existed. It had been concluded by virtue of his commission; it afforded an immense advantage to his country; it involved a political necessity which had already been acknowledged by emperor

and empire, namely, the pacification of those German provinces, which, after all, he could not consider to be so completely his own property as his other provinces were; and thus he was unquestionably bound by its conditions.

But they would have known him ill, who believed that he was likely ever to have given his consent to a compromise, by which he would have been compelled to have regard for others, and been fettered to a foreign policy. Even while yet in Turkey, he issued declarations, by which the treaty made by Vellingk was disowned, and Prussia referred to Holstein for the satisfaction of her demands. When he afterwards unexpectedly returned, towards the year 1714, it was remarked, that nothing was changed in him. The citizens of Stralsund welcomed him with the most heartfelt joy; but when they flattered themselves that his mind would be intent upon peace, they were very much deceived. Charles XII entertained still a hope of entirely changing the state of affairs in the north by gaining the support of France and England, and by the co-operation of his own party. His only care for the moment, was to conclude political alliances, and to get money and troops.

As for Stettin, he at first did not mention it; but the king of Prussia and his ministers did not choose to wait until he was strong enough to dictate his own terms to them.

When an answer was given to the first diplomatical inquiries, Frederic William sent one of his most dis-

tinguished generals, Count Schlippenbach to Stralsund, to obtain from the king of Sweden the ratification of his treaty of sequestration.

All who were about Charles XII, (Maurice Vellingk, the Prince of Hesse, General Daldorf,) tried to induce him to come to an agreement with Prussia, which, in that case, offered even a considerable loan. And they really prevailed upon him so far, that he seemed not averse to own himself the debtor of the Prussian government for the expenses incurred by it. But when afterwards he was urged to promise, that he would not attack the northern confederates from Pomerania, he could not be persuaded to do that for any consideration. The whole of his mind was bent upon struggles with Poland and Moscow; the news that the Russians were advancing inspired him with a joyful martial ardour. Already he gathered his troops around him; it was rumoured that he received subsidies from the king of France, and would, in the following spring, take the field with a new army.

After that, compromise was no more to be thought of. From the autograph letters of Frederic William to his ministers, it is seen that even at that stage of the proceedings, he only demanded guarantees for the fulfilment of the obligations which were contracted towards him, being ready to restore Stettin at the conclusion of peace. "I wish for nothing that is unjust," said he; "I seek for nothing which would be against my conscience; God will assist me."* In

* "Potsdam, Dec. 10. Dieu nous donnera la meilleure assist-

January 1715, the question was considered at Berlin once more in all its bearings ; but nobody could find out an expedient for peace. The most conscientious and cool-headed of all the generals, old Natzmer, declared that it would not be of any avail, even to renounce the money ; and that as Charles XII demanded the immediate evacuation of Stettin, and insisted upon invading Poland, which was contrary to the treaties with the northern confederates, it was the duty of Prussia to fight him ; and, indeed, others added, it ought to be done immediately. It mattered nothing, that Charles XII was not yet armed, as he used to execute his designs “ with confusion, and, nevertheless, with success.” Should he get the upper hand, were it only against Denmark, everything was to be feared from him, for his disposition was revengeful and implacable.

Of all the motives for renewing the Swedish war, this was the most decisive,—that a military state, aiming at conquest, with a king at its head, dreaming only of martial glory, could no longer be suffered in one’s neighbourhood.

The hero of those daring campaigns, who seemed bent upon renewing them, was not yet to be allowed to withdraw from that threatening position already occupied by his ancestors. In addition to his former enemies, a new one opposed him,—a prince who loved the means of war almost more than war itself ; whose

ance: *puisque je ne cherche rien d’injuste et contre ma conscience, que d’être garanti de mon argent.*”

mind was not naturally bent upon conquest; who retired step by step upon the plan of the most tempting conquest; and who long consulted with his conscience,—but, also brought only well trained and superior forces into the field.

Frederic William had immediately, when affairs began to look dangerous, got Russia to guarantee Stettin to him in a secret treaty; whilst he, on the other hand, engaged to consent that Livonia and Esthonia should, at the conclusion of the peace, fall to Russia.*

As he wished to secure himself beforehand on all points, he now tried to procure for his design the express approbation of the common liege-lord, the Roman emperor. The imperial ministers would not speak out so freely, but they declared that in case Charles XII would not accept of any peace, no one could blame the king of Prussia for acting in accordance with his conscience and his engagements, and undertaking a matter which besides was quite consistent with his authority as administrator of the circle with which he was invested.

Thus it came to pass, that Prussia, after having delayed for a long time, at last determined upon making common cause with the northern allies.

At first, the plan was, merely to try what a position taken on the frontier might effect; but it was soon evident that this would be to no purpose, and it was determined to seek Charles XII, if necessary, in the

* June 12. Bergmann, iv, 359.

strong place, when the Swedes had gained their first firm footing on German ground. "He must beat us," said Frederic William, "or perish in that fortress."

In the camp near Schwedt the first general review of the newly organized Prussian army took place. The prince of Anhalt had prepared everything. The army appeared in new and neat uniforms, with furnished arms, in the finest order, and at the same time afforded a very martial sight. During their advance, Saxon auxiliary troops joined them. On the other side the Danes appeared by land and by sea. The combined forces amounted to 60,000 men.*

To them Charles XII opposed no more than 14,000 men, and it could not even be said that he made so good a use of them as he might perhaps have done.

The Prussian officers, at least, were astonished that passes like Loitz, where he might have stopped the whole of the army, had been left undefended, and places where the attack was most likely to be made, as in the island of Usedom, almost unfortified. It is true that to conduct a defensive war, taking advantage of all the most important positions, was not at all his talent; nor did he know how to prevent the landing on Rügen, which must have become decisive

* "Journal de la Campagne de la Pomeranie, 1715," under the date of July 4. Under that of May 23 it is said: "Le roi sans être obligé à rien, a fait voir l'ordre dans ses affaires, il a été le premier en campagne," etc. The king states the number of troops to have been 32,000 Prussians, 8,000 Saxons, and 20,000 Danes.

against his stronghold Stralsund. Only when it had been executed, and the entrenchments round the camp of his enemy were already completed, did he arrive, and make a desperate attack upon them with matchless bravery, everywhere exposing himself to danger. But it was too late, and in vain.

The siege of Stralsund was now begun, and with so much the greater efforts, as very many unsuccessful attacks had been made against it before. Besides which, Natzmer had advised against the enterprise.*

The carrying of the horn-work and the redoubts near the Franken Gate, are famous achievements in the history of northern sieges. At last, in the second half of the year 1715, Charles XII saw that the town could not longer hold out.

Now at length he offered what had been demanded of him the year before, namely to ratify the sequestration, and to make a compromise with king Augustus of Poland. The allies answered him, that, first of all, the town must capitulate; the conditions of peace might be spoken of afterwards.

But to be reduced to the necessity of concluding peace on the ruins of a half-conquered fortress, was a thing which he did not want to hazard. He luckily

* He speaks of it, as of the most difficult and *épineuse entreprise* in the world. Concerning that attack it is stated, "1600 h. sous les ordres du Lieut.-gl. Köppen, Gl.-adj. du roi et auteur du susdit projet de surprendre le retranchement du Frankenthor, dont les Suédois ont fait tant de bruit, se sont glissés," etc.

escaped to Sweden, and the town then fell into the hands of the allies.

Charles XII reminds us of one of those Jomsviking Jarls, who, after having overspread the Baltic and its shores with carnage, and thus drawn upon themselves the reactions of fate, returned to the North, and then disappeared;—his last reverses were principally owing to this, that he, having always remained the same, would not either understand nor acknowledge those changes, which had happened during his absence, in his own kingdom, and throughout the whole of Europe. Sweden was exhausted, and already excited against him; Prussia, conducted by an energetic will and more vigorous than ever; the military science and discipline of the Germans of the North considerably advanced; and the two powers, on the other hand, upon which he relied, namely, England and France, reluctant to afford any substantial aid.

In England, a change most disastrous to him was just taking place, — the accession of the house of Hanover. Whatever pains might be taken to separate the German and the English interests, it was impossible completely to effect it. As a pretender was still living, and sometimes stirring, his antagonists, who had the power of the state at command, attached themselves so much the more closely to the king, in whom those interests were necessarily combined. And Hanover pursued as urgent a claim against the Swedish dominion in Germany, as Brandenburg did. The king of Denmark yielded Bremen and Verden to Hanover,

and England, in return, guaranteed the Danish claims to the Holstein Gottorp country.

This immediately reacted upon France. The Regent-Duke of Orleans entered into the closest alliance with England, on which the general position of European affairs in those times depended. He could not possibly give Sweden such an effectual support as Louis XIV had done in the peace of Nimeguen ; in the year 1716 France consented that Prussia should remain in possession of Stettin.

The succession of the House of Hanover to the English crown, was of itself an event of the greatest weight and consequence for Prussia. George I was the father-in-law of Frederic William I ; the two houses seemed to compose one family. That would, however, not imply, that they were always united ;—yet this was generally the case. They upheld in common the German cause against Sweden, and the Protestant one against Romanism. The authority of an elector of Hanover, who sat on the throne of Britain, and that of the Prussian power, which was now becoming formidable, threw a new weight into the scales of German and general affairs.

A remarkable symptom was then seen at Berlin of the astonishment excited by the independent political attitude of Prussia, (which, being quite a new phenomenon, for that very reason did not yet seem to be fixed for ever,) and also of the discontent which the military rule of the king had called forth.

A Hungarian adventurer of the name of Clement, who, at one time in the suite of Ragoczy, and afterwards by himself, had hung about the courts of Europe, and had occasionally contrived to worm himself into the confidence of distinguished statesmen by procuring for them secret and apparently trustworthy correspondences, formed for this very purpose connexions in Berlin, and, in so doing, fell in with some persons, who were most violently exasperated against the government. They reviled the king for giving good places to officers only, to the neglect of every one else, and, above all, of the men of letters; especially for having deprived themselves, or at least their friends, of their pensions; or perhaps also for having ungraciously looked at them in the streets. The most eminent of these malcontents, Lehmann, met with Clement in Baruth, and whilst walking there in the garden of the court, they excited each other to the wildest plans. Clement mentioned the possibility of a combination between the Imperial and other German courts for the purpose of kidnapping such an eccentric prince as Frederic William was. Lehmann started an opinion, that in this case they ought likewise to seize the two ministers Ilgen and Kraut, on whose activity the whole power of Prussia both at home and abroad then depended. He considered not only this, but also the surprise of the capital, to be quite practicable. He laid before his new friend, who went with him to Berlin, a plan of the

then fortifications of the city, the weak points of which he indicated, shewing how one might attack it unawares, take away the treasure, and plunder the castle and the principal houses. It seems as if they wanted to imitate what they had read in St. Real, of the enterprise of the duke of Ossuna against Venice. The Hungarian adventurer probably knew better than his violent and fantastical correspondent that all this was quite impracticable. In order to pocket some cash, he had the infamous audacity to inform the king of his own designs, as if they were planned against him by his hostile neighbours. Frederic William was indeed taken in by it for a moment; but he soon saw the affair in its true light, got hold of the supposed conspirators, and had them executed together with Clement.*

That spirit of intrigue, which presumes to attain vast objects by superficial combinations, was then particularly rife in Europe. Men of quite a different stamp and consequence, like Görtz and Alberoni, shewed themselves imbued with it. These men had once the idea that they might be able to overthrow

* Letter to the prince of Anhalt, July 19th. "P. S.—Bube"—(who died in prison, as the king thinks, because the ruffian had poisoned himself, so that the truth could no more be got at),—"wrote all the letters to Clement in French, and he was as bad a rogue as Lehmann. Clement confesses all, and says, that the whole project is of Lehmann's invention, who confesses it also; if it had been possible, they would have contrived that I should have been turned out of my country by the emperor."

the Protestant succession, as it had been settled in England, among general exertions and struggles. The Spanish court and Charles XII gave in to ideas of this description, and founded most extensive plans upon them.

The hardest task for the observer, in cases when real talent gets the better of false prudence, is this, whilst affairs are progressing, but not yet accomplished, to distinguish those features which belong to the moment only, together with which they pass away, from those substantial and lasting elements which are proof against any revolution.

Threatened from different sides, Prussia and England united the more closely.

On the 4th of August 1719, they concluded an alliance, in which Frederic William again engaged to uphold the succession in England, and to afford direct support to the house of Hanover, should it be endangered. On the other hand, George I, not only as elector of Hanover, but also as king of England, guaranteed to Frederic William the territory once belonging to Sweden, of which he had now possession. When we read in the secret article which was appended to the public ones, that George I promises to his son-in-law his aid, particularly in the case of his being attacked on account of this alliance in Prussia or Pomerania, we cannot doubt, but that things looked as if that might really be done from Russia or Poland. Yet it did not come to this after all. After the un-

expected death of Charles XII, the English counsels got the upper hand also in Sweden. Peter I, who turned his arms once more against that kingdom, was quite satisfied with being allowed to keep the provinces on the Baltic which he had seized. Nobody could have wrested them from him, especially as the French diplomacy, which afterwards complained of it, at that time even seemed to wish for it. Thus the treaties of peace were concluded, which put an end for ever to the Swedish ascendancy on the German side of the Baltic. On the 20th of January 1720, the treaty was signed, by which Sweden ceded in perpetuity, to the king of Prussia and his heirs, the town of Stettin, the district between the Oder and the Peene, the islands of Usedom and Wollin, together with the Pomeranian half, and its three outlets. The Swedish diet declared, that, in the actual state of affairs, it could not disapprove of this peace, and gave its consent to it.

The possession of the mouths of the Oder, and of a place like Stettin, so near the capital, and so opportunely situated for the Baltic, where, according to the treaties, a free commerce was to be restored, was of incalculable advantage.

Frederic William accepted with joy, in the year 1721, its homage. He returned to the citizens the arms which had for some time been taken away from them, and he sent to the town a French colony, thus hoping to advance the prosperity of the place.

In general, the enlarged geographical position of the provinces united, gave them by degrees the appearance of a first-rate power.

From the eastern frontiers of the really Germanized provinces,—for beyond them, we find rather colonies which had not drawn the whole territory which surrounded them into Germany,—Prussia extended, (it is true, not without great interruptions), as far as into the old western Marches of the German nation. It already then faced France and Russia. There it spread over territories, where Scandinavian and Slavonian people had met each other from the remotest ages, where Poles, Russians, and Swedes, had so often fought during the last centuries; and in the midst of them, it had kept up the principle of German civilization. It was very well in accordance with its great historical position, that all its powers of colonization were directed to the eastern frontiers. In the west those countries were occupied, where so many contests had been fought between Spaniards and Dutch for religious—and between Austria and France—for political ascendancy; and it was to be considered as an advantage for every body that the German and Protestant interests had found a sure stronghold in an energetic government, jealous of its claims.* But the groundwork of the power, after all, was formed by those central countries on the Oder and the Elbe, which slowly,

* Old Marperger already applies to it the saying of Curtius, “*Unâ manu orientem, alterâ occidentem tangit.*”

but steadily, under this thoughtful management, recovered from the devastation of the thirty years' war. On these especially, the military-administrative system was founded, which imparted unity and uniformity to the whole. The territorial independence of a German principality was most clearly stamped on it; merely for the sake of being able to be what it was, it was obliged to adopt a peculiar and exclusive character.

However true it may be, that its growth could not have been thought of without Protestantism, and that the Protestant name rose anew into consideration by it, yet the aim and meaning of its existence was by no means of merely a sectarian nature. The first German prince, whom we know to have gladly hailed the rising of the Brandenburg-Prussian power, was a Roman Catholic one, namely, the elector Maximilian Emmanuel of Bavaria, who had been driven out of his dominions by Austria. While still in Paris, he told the Prussian ambassador, that he was delighted to see at least one of the princes of the empire, who employed his means for the purpose of being independent; he hoped that this would profit every one, and especially also himself.*

Time was now to shew, how this North-German independence would keep its position, as well with

* "Qu'il souhaitait fort l'amitié du roi de Prusse, voyant avec plaisir un prince dans l'empire, qui avait réglé ses affaires sur un pied, à pouvoir soutenir au besoin les privilèges et prérogatives dudit empire; qu'il pouvait peut-être un jour survenir des conjonctures à devoir prendre des mesures ensemble."

regard to emperor and empire, as to the European powers;—whether it would be strong enough among their dissensions to choose, and to maintain, in the questions of the day, a policy, consistent with the nature of its existence, and vigorous enough to develop its inward resources, in a manner consistent with the claims and necessities of human life.

Something had already been done, but more was still to be done.

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HISTORY
OF THE
PRUSSIAN
MONARCHY,

FROM ITS RISE TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY
LEOPOLD RANKE,
AUTHOR OF "LIVES OF THE POPES," "HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION,"
ETC.

TRANSLATED BY
PROFESSOR DEMMLER.

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BOOK II.

FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF FREDERIC WILLIAM I FROM 1725 TO 1732—THE YOUTH OF FREDERIC II.

THOUGH in reviewing the peculiar rise of the Brandenburg-Prussian state, we could hitherto avoid entering at length upon the general complications of European affairs, it now becomes necessary to do so, as they gradually call forth the circumstances under which Prussia, the principal subject of this history, has raised itself to the rank of an European power. Great exertions are required until states, emerging from that secluded pupilage, which they likewise have to go through, arrive at that stage, when by action, or reaction, or by co-operation, they prove themselves the peers and equals of the foreigner, and force their way through the world.

The old system of the European states had been essentially changed already, in the beginning of the eighteenth century. They had gained more natural and simple positions.

Formerly everything hinged upon the rivalry and the continual contest between France and the two branches of the house of Austria. *This was by no means at an end ; yet the state of affairs was quite different.*

If we remember what vast consequences resulted from the junction of Austria and Spain, from the settlement and maintenance of it, and from its influence upon the religious struggles, we also see of what importance its dissolution was for the general policy of Europe, and for the two powers themselves. Austria had returned to the original tendencies of its provincial rule. This rested principally on the combination of the German archduchies with Bohemia and Hungary, which had been often attempted since the thirteenth century, and had been carried out in the seventeenth; a position now geographically consolidated by the acquisition of some territories in Upper Italy, to which, soon afterwards, remoter ones also were added. The whole epoch of the Burgundian family had only served to found a territorial power in South Eastern Europe. To this purpose the revenues from the South American mines must have sometimes contributed; now they were no longer so requisite.

Thus also Spain, with her colonies, formed a world apart. It was of the greatest consequence that she no more possessed the Netherlands, by which she had until now been placed in immediate connexion with the northern and western, and also with the German states. But, at the same time, the question arose whether she would not henceforward be too dependant upon France. The French plenipotentiaries, at the several conferences for the conclusion of peace, said, without the least disguise, that the Spanish dons were bound to anticipate the wishes of France.

Without doubt, the French monarchy gained, by the establishment of a second Bourbon throne, an increase of power in the south of Europe. It is, however, known that the result has been attained to, not so much in consequence of its military superiority, as by an unforeseen complication of affairs. If we compare the former state of things with that in which they were then, we perceive that France, in spite of all her power, enjoyed far less influence than she had exercised in the flourishing times of Louis XIV. The English throne was no longer occupied by a Stuart, who wanted French money, or French assistance. The Revolution of 1688, and the ascendancy of the Protestant aristocracy, and of parliamentary rule established by it, were upheld by the house of Hanover, which, at that time, owed them still the crown. Properly speaking, the whole had been done out of opposition to France, towards which one might now, according to circumstances, pursue a friendly policy in Spain, without having to fear from it at home.

In the east of Europe, Sweden, with which it was almost an hereditary custom to draw the sword in agreement with France, had, in a great measure, ceased to be dreaded. On the other hand, Russia arose, and developed its native old Sclavonian resources, under the fostering beams of German civilization, into a power which followed only its own counsels.

The settlement of the four Powers, of Austria, France, England, Russia, in the unalterable, and

If we remember what vast consequences result from the junction of Austria and Spain, from the settlement and maintenance of it, and from its influence upon the religious struggles, we also see of what importance its dissolution was for the general peace of Europe, and for the two powers themselves. Austria had returned to the original tendencies of its provincial rule. This rested principally on the combination of the German archduchies with Bohemia and Hungary, which had been often attempted since the thirteenth century, and had been carried out in the seventeenth; a position now geographically consolidated by the acquisition of some territories in Upper Italy, to which, soon afterwards, remoter ones also were added. The whole epoch of the Burgundian family had only served to found a territorial power in South Eastern Europe. To this purpose the revenues from the South American mines must have sometimes contributed; now they were no longer so requisite.

Thus also Spain, with her colonies, formed a world apart. It was of the greatest consequence that she no more possessed the Netherlands, by which she had until now been placed in immediate connexion with the northern and western, and also with the German states. But, at the same time, the question arose whether she would not henceforward be too dependant upon France. The French plenipotentiaries, at the several conferences for the conclusion of peace, said, without the least disguise, that the Spanish dons were bound to anticipate the wishes of France.

The most important of these was, that with regard to one of the four great states,—namely, to Austria, before even it had completely agreed with the rest, and concluded peace in every quarter,—doubts were entertained concerning its future existence.

After Joseph I had died without male heirs, and Charles VI had lived several years in an unfruitful marriage, people began to fear at Vienna, lest the German line of the house of Habsburg would have in a short time to suffer the same fate which had befallen the Spanish one.* The victories gained against the Turks filled the hearts of the Austrians with sadness, when they remembered that their state was perhaps as mortal as the emperor, and that at his death a dissolution of the monarchy was to be expected. "To what purpose," we may imagine one of them asking, "all this bloodshed, all this conquering and devastating of countries, when we have such a prospect before us?"

It has been remarked, that the whole system of diplomacy, during the second half of the seventeenth century, was moulded by the expectation of the vacancy of the Spanish throne, and the designs connected with it. Thus the movements concerning the succession in Austria began many years before the death of Charles VI: the diplomatical transactions were now swayed by this expectation as formerly by the other.

* Prince Eugene tells us (Writings, vol. i, 84), that Count Wratislaus had often said: "May God give us a prince, otherwise there is no help for it, but that the Austrian hereditary countries become *spolia gentium*."

All the efforts of the Austrian policy, as well domestic as foreign, had for their object the prevention of the dissolution of the hereditary dominions.

The first man who seriously thought of it was, as far as we know, Count Sinzendorf, at that time vice-president of the Aulic council. It was especially at his suggestion that the emperor, April 19, 1713, at a solemn meeting of his privy council, had a family law promulgated, according to which the hereditary kingdoms and territories, as he had received them, were, after his death, to pass altogether and undivided to his male heirs, but if he had none, to his daughters; and should these fail, to the archduchesses, the daughters of his late brother; but at all events, as is expressly repeated, undivided, and after the right of primogeniture. It was when the plague was actually raging at Vienna, and all over the town unexpected deaths were happening every day, that the emperor published this act of succession, to which a name was given, used originally by the ancient Roman emperors, and afterwards preserved at the Spanish court,—that of the Pragmatic Sanction.

But it acquired direct importance from the fact alone, that the emperor, after the early death of an infant son, had only daughters born to him,—the eldest, Maria Theresa, May 13, 1717, who would have the benefit of it, if she could gain an assent which was indispensable. Prince Eugene of Savoy and Count Sinzendorf, especially, were of opinion that no time ought to be lost to obtain it. It might indeed be

that God might bless the emperor with a male heir, but this would not relieve his ministers from the duty of providing for the opposite case. One should only remember the difficulties into which, not only Spain, but also other countries (for instance, Sweden) had been plunged, owing to the failure of a settled succession.*

In the Netherlands, which, at that time, had fallen to the share of the house of Habsburg from the Spanish inheritance, and in the Austrian archduchies, there was no difficulty in obtaining the consent of the states: after some hesitation, Hungary also consented to extend to females the right of succession to the crown, and to pass the act by which that kingdom was to remain inseparably united with the other countries of the emperor: a difficulty was, however, made in Bohemia.

It was not that the states had hesitated to meet the wishes of the court, but Bohemia was not a crown only, but likewise an electorate of the empire; and to confer the latter dignity upon a woman was contrary to the ancient laws of Germany, and to immemorial tradition.

Prince Eugene expressed himself in a most remarkable manner on this subject. He allows that it was not conformable to the notions of high political right, or to "strict observance" (precedent); but it had common sense in its favour. As the heiress was,

* Memorial of Eugene, January 3, 1719.—Writings, v. 55.

without any doubt, entitled to the possession of the crown, which was the main point ; the minor one—the electoral dignity connected with it—could not be disputed to her. Those celebrated fundamental laws of the empire were subject to the dictates of political reason, to the demands of political expediency, and to the chances of political revolutions.

This was not addressed to the Bohemians ; but to the electors and to the empire. From the position of European affairs, that excellent general and minister argued the necessity of following this policy. The Golden Bull was to give way to the balance of Europe ; for which the power of Austria was indispensable.

The chief question now was,—whether this view could be made to be generally accepted, and confirmed by treaties ; otherwise it was not to be expected that the reigning, and other houses, which might lay claim to the inheritance, would yield to such a new family law. However firmly Eugene was convinced that the matter was not to be settled by treaties,—for there had never been a treaty in the world which had been deemed inviolable, or only executed according to its real meaning,—yet it was his opinion, that in every treaty to be concluded with a foreign state, the acknowledgment of the Pragmatic Sanction must be insisted upon as an indispensable condition ; so that, in case of an aggression, one might at least refer to it as a document of international law.

It may be asked,—whether, taking this view, it would not have been better to renounce the way of

diplomacy, and to secure oneself against any possible attack, merely by increasing the military force? But such determined ideas could not be carried out by a minister. On treaties of peace, and political compacts,—although they might often be violated,—the state of public affairs in Europe rested ; and, perhaps, still more so in appearance than was really the case, as the internal strength, and the mutual relation of the states, were, after all, the principal points.

The first compromise of any importance made in this spirit,—which, however, went much farther than the mere adjusting of the balance required,—was offered by a dynasty from which it was least expected : namely, from the branch of the house of Bourbon reigning in Spain, which had until now kept up the most violent struggle against Austria, and had not yet concluded its peace.

It is known that the principal motive for acting thus did not spring, as it was once said, from the insult which the Spanish court had received from the French, when the young king, Louis XV, sent back the infanta, to whom he was affianced, and preferred to marry the daughter of Stanislaus Lescinski : there were some other less personal inducements for it, which arose from the interests of the two empires.

Spain found the mercantile superiority which England exercised, as well in the Indies as in Europe, insupportable, and wished, above all things, to reconquer Gibraltar and Minorca. Nor had Charles VI any mind to submit to the commercial ascendancy of the

two maritime powers. If this prince ever had a peculiar predilection for any thing, it was for commerce and navigation;* and his favour might always be won by any bold and specious project of this kind. For the Austrian countries, this disposition has by no means remained without consequences: the rise of Trieste may chiefly be attributed to it. But his designs reached much farther. In the Netherlands also, at Ostend, he had established, and endowed with privileges, a company of merchants, from which he expected a great impulse would be given to the trade of Belgium. In the friendly port of Lisbon, Austrian sails from Trieste and Ostend were to meet. There were at that time really imperial ships seen in the East India seas.

Perceiving these symptoms, a man whose name often occurs in the history of those years, Ripperda, a native of Holland, who had risen in the Spanish service, conceived the idea of establishing a new alliance between Spain and Austria. The two powers united would have inexhaustible resources, become of irresistible strength, and easily get rid of their enemies. He was himself sent, in November 1724, to Vienna, in order to carry out his own plan.

In this he succeeded beyond all expectation.

In the first place a peace was concluded, in which

* Foscarini, "*Storia arcana in Archivio storico-italiano*," speaks of the "*strana passione avuta de S. M. nei commercii et in ogni altra industria il cui fine sia generare ricchezza*"; of an "*inclinazione per cui rendeva sì disposto a secundare leggermente ogni vano promettitore di ideali profitti*."

each of the contracting parties resigned every claim to the other's possessions; and Spain expressly guaranteed the new Austrian family law, by which the succession was extended to the female line, as an act which had been concluded quite in accordance with the notions of their ancestors, and approved of by public opinion.*

Then another double compact was made, in which, on the one hand, Spain acknowledged the Ostend company, treated the subjects of Austria on the footing of the most favoured nations in their ports, and engaged to take them under her protection in this, and on the other side of the line. The emperor, for his part, pledged himself to do his utmost to induce England to give up Gibraltar and Port Mahon.†

But even this mutual accommodation of the most particular interests seemed not quite to satisfy this suddenly-risen desire for an alliance.

In his very first instructions, Philip V had commissioned his ambassador, with the proudest emphasis of Roman Catholic orthodoxy, to bring about a league of the two monarchies against Turks and Protestants; and, above all, the closest family alliance. It is evident that this hope and prospect was the assimilating principle of the whole transaction. After some time,

* "Pax inter Carolum Sextum et Philippum Quintum," Viennæ, 30 Aprilis, 1725, Art xii, Du Mont, viii, ii, 108.

† "Fœdus inter sacram Cæsaream et Catholicam majestatem, et sacram Catholicam majestatem," dated 30th April.—*Ibid.* 113. "Traité de Navigation et de Commerce . . fait à Vienne le 1 Mai." —*Ibid.* 114.

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Ripperda succeeded in concluding a treaty which satisfied every wish of the Spanish court.

These agreements have been much spoken of between the powers, and in literature ; more than a century after their conclusion, in these our days only, they have been published.*

Everything hinged upon the emperor's declaring himself inclined (although not without a remarkable reservation) to marry his daughter Maria Theresa,—whose title to the great Austrian inheritance had just been settled,—to the Spanish infant, Don Carlos, the eldest son of the queen of Spain. Ripperda asserted, that the imperial court, at first, had rather in view the Prince of Asturias, Don Ferdinand; and that he, the ambassador, had turned the choice upon Don Carlos. Then there was also really the necessity acknowledged in the treaty, of keeping the three powers—France, Spain, and the emperor—separate: express stipulations having been made to prevent marriages between the imperial and Spanish families, and the French. On the other hand, Don Carlos, to whom the succession in Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia, was secured, would, by his marriage with the heiress of Austria, have added those countries to the Austrian monarchy, which at that time also included Naples and Sicily. The wish of Spain, that

* Alizandro de Cantillo: "Tratados de paz desde el anno de 1700, qui han hecho los monarcas Españoles de la casa de Borbon." Madrid, 1843. "Tratado muy secreto de amistad ay alianza."—*Ibid.* 231, Art. II, 8.

Don Carlos should then be elected king of the Romans, was not expressly mentioned in the treaty; but it is evident that this was aimed at.

Philip V promised, in this election, to exert his influence and his power to keep the imperial crown in the Austrian dynasty and house, which would then have become his own. Should war, as it was expected, break out in consequence against the French and the English, it was proposed to take from the former all those conquests which they had made from the house of Austria and Spain,—not even Burgundy excepted,—and to restore Lorraine to the state in which it had been in the year 1633; and to drive the latter, by force of arms, from Gibraltar and Minorca.

It was a treaty formed on the model of those which had once been concluded between the two Habsburg lines. They wished to make common cause against the French and the Turks; and if a war should be kindled within or without the empire, against the Protestants also.*

This is the tenor of the treaty. Its intention seemed to be the restoration of the old Spanish-Austrian ascendancy.

Notwithstanding all this, one might almost be inclined to doubt whether the court of Vienna was really in earnest in this affair; whether it did not merely yield to the impetuous solicitations of the Spaniards. Very perplexing, at least, is the clause already alluded

* As it is said in the Instruction, "*Alianza defensiva contra el Turco, y los principes protestantes.*"

to. The marriage of the eldest archduchess is not to be considered as a settled matter, unless the emperor should die before she arrives at the age of maturity ; and the only definitively decided point, is the marriage of two young archduchesses (there were three of them living) into the Spanish house. From the language of Eugene it might be concluded, that the court had cared for nothing but the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction : yet there could be no hope of obtaining it, except by opening great and brilliant prospects to the queen of Spain. The treaty, as it was concluded, did not grant all that he wished : still it offered immense advantages. If Austria once disposed of her Indian treasures, she might likewise venture again to assume a threatening attitude against the other European powers.

It may easily be understood, that already the mutual approach of the two hitherto hostile powers, and their treaty of peace,—still more the agreements which had passed between them, and which had transpired ; and, most of all, their tendency, which was guessed before it had completely developed itself,—must have caused a general commotion in Europe.

France kept a watchful eye upon the Austrian succession,—just as it had done with regard to that of Spain,—and would not allow any one-sided settlement of it ; and, least of all, a compact by which it was afraid of being injuriously affected.

The two maritime powers had for a long time raised objections against the establishment of the Austrian

commercial company. Holland especially had urged an article of the peace of Westphalia against it. But this company had now privileges granted to it, which gave it the advantage over every competitor,* and it must be kept up with the power of arms.

On the other hand, the English nation was exasperated at this, and broke out into abuse against the emperor, who, after having been maintained in his Italian countries by English sacrifices, as a reward for it, threatened England with the loss of its commerce. The hidden designs of a secret alliance were heard of. However far these might reach, it happened, as usual, that the suppositions exceeded what had really been resolved upon. An article was shewn about, according to which the two courts were stated to have conspired to attempt a restoration in favour of the Pretender in England. This was all that was wanting to undo everything that had been done since the last hundred years.

And it seemed also inevitable, that the north should

* In the second article of the "*Traité de Navigation*," the Austrian ships are permitted to buy everywhere (consequently in America also), "*à prix raisonnable toutes les choses dont ils auront besoin, soit pour leur nécessaire, soit pour la réparation des navires, ou autrement.*" As they were only excluded from trading in the East Indies, it was inferred from it, that they were permitted to trade in America. Colonel Blader said in the English parliament, that this implied "a permission to vend their merchandizes for ready money, so that it was manifest that the subjects of the Austrian Low Countries were allowed more extensive privileges than ever had been granted to any nation," which was contrary to all treaties.—*Parl. Hist.* viii, 506.

excitement. What must have been the impression, when, just at the second secular jubilee of the Reformation, the Protestant world had to learn, that the electoral prince of Saxony, whose steadfastness was still confided in, had followed the example of his father, and gone over to Romanism! As he, at the same time, had married a niece of the emperor, the daughter of his brother and predecessor Joseph, the conversion was attributed to Charles VI himself. The latter was once told most pertinently, that in this manner it would be just as well to have the pope for emperor. At least he seemed to have forgotten for a moment, that an emperor must belong to both parties. But how dangerous became, under these circumstances, so close a union between himself and Spain, by which the Protestants were put on a par with infidels.

And with reference to political affairs also, the king of Prussia complained of having been treated during the whole time of his reign without regard, even with hostility; and that he was not heard in the imperial courts,* but at once condemned. The emperor had successively upheld against the king the allodial heirs of Limburg, the abbot of Werden, and the chapter of Quedlinburg; and in the case of the last of

* The method which the imperial court employs is this, "that all the rights of our house, even whole provinces and countries, although our ancestors, and we ourselves, had possessed them, are disputed to us; and other states of the empire, the relatives of our house themselves, and our own subjects, are set on,—nay, what is almost unheard of, compelled by the imperial high-steward to impugn these rights, and to make appeals to the emperor."

these, he had even commissioned some neighbours with the execution of his decrees.*

And thus Frederic William could not be a very zealous partizan of the emperor when these great differences arose.

He had besides many an occasion to lend an ear to the antagonists of the emperor who applied to him, especially to the English court.

As often as George I came over to Hanover, he managed, if possible, to meet his daughter and his son-in-law. Sometimes he went himself to Berlin, in order to see the growing family of his grandchildren; but oftener the king and queen of Prussia repaired to Hanover, or to that hunting district on the borders of the Old March, where large forests of oak and beech-trees mark the old boundary between the Saxon and Vandal nations,—the Göhrde. In the summer of 1725, king George I visited his Hanoverian dominions, accompanied by the English minister, Lord Townshend, a man who combined spirit and boldness with experience and circumspection, in the management of business. Frederic William and Sophia Dorothea were his guests, and their time was principally spent together in the gardens of Herrenhausen, which were then considered the finest in the world.

Now the English policy was particularly aided by

* "Because they have at Vienna the maxim that we ought to be humbled in all possible ways, and that, although we might be right in an affair, the *raison d'état* would not allow us to carry our point."—Grievances of January 1725.

the circumstance, that the queen of Prussia wished to bring about a new alliance between the two families. The matter might have been before discussed in conversation; but nothing was settled concerning it.* Most affectionately received by her father, the queen hoped now to obtain a positive promise. Lord Townshend expresses in one of his letters the opinion, that there would not be any difficulty about it.

At the same time, Townshend introduced the subject of public affairs. Frederic William was not particularly fond of this mode of transacting business. Ardent and impetuous as he was, he had frequently to repent of having gone too far, or said too much, in personal communications; and on other occasions, he may have yielded too much, and allowed himself to be drawn in to do more than what he afterwards approved of. But, what people apprehend of themselves, they are precisely on that account apt to do again. He entered this time also into personal conferences, and Lord Townshend succeeded in moving his very soul. The events in Thorn, where a tumult, which had arisen at a procession of the Jesuits, was punished by the Poles in a manner which was contrary to the rights of the Protestants, as acknowledged in the treaties of peace, excited his evangelical

* It is a mistake of the Princess Fredrica Wilhelmina, when she states, that two years before, in a treaty concluded at Charlottenburg, an arrangement had been made concerning her marriage with the heir-presumptive to the throne of England. That treaty, even in its secret articles, does not mention one word of it.

sympathies. The alliance of the emperor with Spain seemed to imply a general danger.

Lord Townshend represented that an opposition league of European powers was necessary.

Yet he would not have succeeded, after all, had he not given hopes of support in an affair which now constituted almost the most important object of Prussian policy,—namely, in the newly reviving litigation about the inheritance of Juliers. All these interests operate only when combined; but we must be allowed to state one fact after the other.

When the elector Frederic William once resolved to renounce one half of that inheritance, contenting himself with the real possession of the other, he reserved his claims to the reversion of the former, should the house of Neuburg ever become extinct. This seemed at that time a very remote contingency, the Count Palatine Philip, with whom the elector made his compact, being surrounded by eight healthy sons. But it now happened, that of these, some took orders; others, although laymen, remained unmarried; and those who had entered the married state, had either female issue only, or none at all. The last of them, Charles Philip, now elector palatine,—one of those princes who at that time got an odious name by religious persecutions,—had two daughters only, and the extinction of the male line of this branch might with certainty be foreseen. The elector Charles Philip wished for nothing more eagerly than to get the succession to the dominions of Juliers for his son-in-law,

the Count Palatine of Sulzbach ; and the latter seemed to possess the favour of the imperial court. But the king of Prussia had no mind to allow himself to be ousted of a right which he considered as quite incontestable. As to England, it had already, in a treaty concluded A.D. 1723, at Charlottenburg (in which older agreements were renewed, and not only the states and possessions, but likewise the rights and prerogatives of both parties mutually guaranteed), expressly acknowledged the Prussian claims to Juliers and Berg. In a secret article, George had promised that in the case of the male line of the house of Neuburg becoming extinct, he would favour the rightful claims of the king of Prussia to the inheritance, and not suffer his right to be violated. The repetition of the word right is not intended as a limitation ; but rather that it may more emphatically express the motive. The support of the French, then the best allies of England, might also be reckoned upon, and their consent was of decisive weight with regard to provinces which were so near their frontier. For some time, already, transactions had been carried on in the affair. France had, as early as in December 1724,*

* Letter from Rothenburg, December 15, 1724. "Votre excellence verra, par le second art., que le roi s'est déterminé à la considération de S. M. Prussienne à prendre sur l'affaire de Clèves et de Juliers les mêmes engagemens que le roi d'Angleterre à pris à cette égard par l'article secret du traité de Charlottenbourg ; persuadé que cette facilité ne fera que reserrer les nœuds de l'union qui subsiste entre S. M. et le roi de Prusse, et dont elle désire le maintien."

declared her readiness to enter into the same obligations with respect to Juliers and Berg, which England had taken upon herself. That the matter had not yet come to a settlement was the fault of the king of Prussia himself, who felt a certain hesitation to shackle himself for future contingencies by such comprehensive alliances, the ultimate objects of which were not quite to be traced. But now, under the impression of the new league between Spain and Austria, in which it was, and indeed quite correctly, supposed, that mention was made also of that inheritance, every doubt disappeared. The project of an alliance was presented to the king, to which he added some marginal notes, but on the whole approved of it.

One of his principal remarks is this: that he wished not to be involved by it in dissensions with Russia, contrary to his former treaties with that power. With the most urgent haste, Ilgen was summoned, who, for his own part, was still less inclined than the king, to fetter the policy of Prussia for the future, and who never lost sight of the advantages which must spring from a good understanding with the emperor; but under the circumstances of the moment, and, as the proposed league was defensive, and not offensive, he dropped every objection. Thus the treaty of Hanover was concluded, September 3, 1728, between France, England, and Prussia.

The most important point in it is this, that the three powers mutually guarantee to each other not only their possessions, but also their rights. France

expressly promises to support the other two allies, if anything to their disadvantage were undertaken in the empire; they were in common to consider the proposals which might be made to them concerning the imperial succession, and to accept of none which might appear inadequate for their interests, and for the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe. It is evident that the whole agreement hinges upon the resistance which they wanted to make against the supposed imperial designs, and upon the mutual guarantee of each other's rights. Such a vague stipulation could not, however, satisfy the king of Prussia. The treaty became known immediately after its conclusion. It has been often printed, and countless abstracts have been made of it; yet it has not been published entire. What gives it its importance for Prussia, is a secret article inserted in the original before the separate ones, which has until now nearly remained secret. Both France and England promise in it not to allow, on the extinction of the house of Neuburg, the countries of Juliers and Berg, to which Prussia laid claim, to be sequestered, or a formal process to be entered thereupon; nor that his Prussian majesty should suffer any wrong in the affair. They would, on the contrary, do their utmost to make the parties submit to the arbitration of impartial powers.*

* The article runs thus: "S. M. le roi de Prusse ayant présenté à S. M. très Chrétienne, et à S. M. Britannique, que lors de l'extinction des princes de la maison de Neubourg elle aurait des prétensions à exercer sur la succession de Berg et de Juliers, et ayant

General considerations, as well as this particular advantage, induced the king to sign the treaty.

Thus in the great European contest which seemed to kindle, Frederic William resolutely joined the anti-Austrian side.

A step of the greatest political boldness, if we consider how the Brandenburg affairs had risen ; and what obligations, after all, a prince of the empire had to the emperor. It was the more dangerous, since, on the side which Prussia joined, manifold difficulties arose as soon as it was considered how necessary it yet was to seek for increase of strength. The league of Hanover has never been quite realized to the extent which the contracting parties had designed.

Holland, which could not be dispensed with, would never have consented to that secret article. The mere word, that the "rights," and not possessions alone,

demandé a LL. DD. MM. de vouloir bien lui être favorables en lui assurant l'effet des conventions faites ci-devant sur ce sujet; et leurs dites MM. très Chrétienne et Britannique, voulant en tout ce que dépend d'elles donner à S. M. le roi de Prusse, des témoignages de leur attention pour toutes les choses qui l'intéressent, elles promettent, que le cas arrivant qu'il n'y eut plus de princes de la maison de Neubourg, elles favoriseront et séconderont les justes prétensions de S. M. Prussienne, et elles tâcheront par les moyens les plus efficaces à porter toutes les parties intéressés à soumettre leur prétensions à l'arbitrage des puissances impartiales dont on conviendra dans la suite. Et à cette fin, elles empêcheront que les sus-dits Duchés ne soient mis en sequestre, ni que l'affaire ne soit réduite en procès formel, ni qu'on y procède contre S. M. Prussienne par voie de fait, afin qu'il ne soit fait aucun tort à S. M. Prussienne, mais au contraire toute la justice qui lui est due. Cet article secret aura la même force," etc.

were to be mutually guaranteed, excited the apprehensions of the States, as they had been acute enough to refer it, at first sight, to Juliers and Berg. It was not ventured even so much as to acquaint them with the existence of that secret article.

If, on the other hand, Holland asked to proceed in good earnest against the Ostend company, requiring, however, to be assured, for this purpose, of the sufficient support of the others against the emperor, the king of Prussia did not feel inclined to enter upon the matter. It was his opinion, that the world cared very little whether Holland, in the sale of coffee, or of china, or of the produce of its own country, got better or worse prices : for such a business he would not draw his sword.

Frederic William felt just as little called upon to stand up for the maintenance of the Gottorp countries, in favour of the crown of Denmark, which they likewise tried to draw into the league. He repeated what he had already declared before signing the treaty, that he would never oppose the Russians if they should set up the duke in Sleswick ; but that if the Russians attacked Bremen and Verden, or presumed to molest Hanover, he would hinder them with all his might.

In short, it was impossible to reconcile, in this case, the interests of Prussia, Denmark, and Holland.

But very soon Frederic William also took umbrage at the conduct of France and England.

It seemed to him, that the enterprises which the maritime powers meditated against the Ostend com-

pany, partook of the offensive, and were utterly inconsistent with a defensive league, which he had deemed the Hanoverian one to be. He felt indignant at being compelled to suppose that he was to be connected with an alliance, the ultimate objects of which were not even disclosed to him. All his pride was roused when he thought that they wanted to make use of him as an "understrapper," as he calls it.

Then all those political scruples were awakened in him which pleaded against the alliance,—although, indeed, when everything was done. How would it be, he reasoned, if war really broke out on that account? He would have to bear the brunt of it. His country was not protected by the sea, as England; nor by fortresses, as France. Let them therefore tell him what they wanted from the emperor, and by what means, if he refused, they meant to compel him? What amount of troops each ally would have to furnish; and where the seat of war was to be? He, for instance, who had to expect the first attack, ought to be enabled to send a sufficient force to the frontier of Silesia, in order, if need be, to invade that province; or also Bohemia.

In May he demanded that an auxiliary army of 28,000 foot and 10,000 horse, should be kept in readiness for him. Prussian officers should be present at the mustering, and see that the regiments were complete. At the first summons of the king, the army should make its appearance at the appointed rendez-

vous.* But, as in this he was not fighting in his own cause, but in a foreign one, he considered it only fair, that he whose country might very likely become the scene of the war, should be secured from loss and damage ; and that the guarantee, which had formerly been promised to him, should be enlarged, and put on a firmer basis.

To this the allies made answer, that, if the emperor

* In an autograph memorandum of the king, it is stated, for example :—

“ The allies consisted of king England, king France, king Prussia, king Sardinia, of the elector of Bavaria, of the Hollanders, of landgrave Hesse;—

“ The allied ought to say, the emperor must put down the Ostend company ; the emperor must do this or that ; now, if he won't do what the said allies want, then the allies must make a disposition to compel the emperor, which must be as follows.

“ The three first kings and the Hollanders furnish their army of so many troops, which such or such one is to command ; the army shall be concentrated not far from Maestricht, and dislodge the imperial troops from Brabant. Holland gives artillery, England gives bread, France —, Prussia —.

“ The emperor will certainly conclude an alliance with Poland and Moscow, to amuse the king of Prussia : as to the northern army, of what troops shall it consist ? Who shall command it, and who will furnish the supplies ?

“ In Italy, the king of Sicily (Sardinia) must act. France must have an army against the Spanish frontier, and another against Swabia, to keep the princes of the empire in order or *échec*.

“ This would be a disposition which England, Holland, France must make, and ask Prussia, whether he will accord, and for what consideration ; as Prussia has great risk and hazard, as his countries may become *le champ de la guerre*, and suffer very much from it ; and I ought to know what I am to expect in exchange.”

attacked, from Silesia, the Prussian provinces, the English fleet should bombard Naples.

Frederic William, before he came out with that demand, had summoned his principal generals and ministers, and challenged them to state their opinions, as they would be able to answer for them before God. To offers which had been so solemnly considered,—and which were fixed, indeed, with regard to the dangers incurred, as well as to the obligations of the league of Hanover,—he received that answer, which to him, whose mind was set merely upon what was present, appeared almost as a mockery.

And it was by no means his opinion, that England and France, relying on his alliance, although without his help, should wage war against the emperor by themselves, to the detriment of the latter. He had merely wanted to defend himself against the ascendancy of the house of Austria, which had been described to him as so menacing. But it had not been his wish to attack, or to ruin it.

Even an aggression on the Netherland provinces, with a view to destroy the Ostend company, seemed unwarrantable to him. The Prussian ambassador, at the imperial diet, after having examined the old records, reported, that the Burgundian circle, which comprehended those countries, was still considered as a part of the empire ; an attack, therefore, on them, would be an attack on the latter.

But when the king called to mind what he had heard at Herrenhausen from the foreign ambassa-

dors, he conceived the idea, that their views were directed to the utter ruin of the house of Austria. He thought that he had heard, that one ought, as much as possible, to humble that house, and, after the death of the emperor, divide his countries.

Thus the danger of an obnoxious ascendancy, which hitherto had threatened only on one side, now presented itself to him on the other. How will it be, said the king, when Austria is ruined? will an English or a French emperor then be made?—He deemed that it was better to have, as heretofore, an emperor of German extraction, and of Austrian blood.

To minds of the highest order only, the different sides of a question present themselves at once, and complete; to others, who depend more on outward impressions, they reveal themselves but by degrees.

If the Austrian succession kept free from the hazardous combinations which confused the Spanish one, it remained, on the whole, a very welcome political fact. Or must not a dissolution of the aggregate dominions of Austria at last, profit the French only, and perhaps the English,—just as had been the case with the Spanish monarchy? Who could then have afforded protection against their ascendancy?

This is, in fact, the meaning of Frederic William's saying, that the aspirations of French and English to the imperial dignity, reminded him of the fable of the stork and the frogs. Once in the empire, they would have become its masters.

If the elector, by many a slight received from the

imperial court, by the encroachments of the Roman Catholics, and from family considerations, had been induced to enter into the alliance of Hanover,—the latter, by its tendency to the offensive, which might have become dangerous to the condition of the empire, excited his apprehensions and disgust. In the summer, 1727, he had been very much alienated from it.

RETURN TO NEUTRALITY.

One evening in June, the king was sitting at a window in the castle, looking at the people who were promenading on the banks of the neighbouring river, when he saw, among the crowd, an old acquaintance, the imperial general Count Seckendorf. He beckoned to him, and asked him to come in and sit down with him.

Count Seckendorf was distinguished by the circumstance, that although a native of northern Germany, and a Protestant, as well as a nephew of that Seckendorf, who, as historian of Lutheranism, had gained such an honourable name, he nevertheless rose to the highest dignities in the imperial army, and acquired a great influence upon business. To the Protestant princes he appeared as a most appropriate mediator at a court, the favour or displeasure of which was of such immense consequence for every one of them ; and he, on his side, made the confidence which they placed in him serve his own ends.

Long before this, during the war in the Netherlands, he had become acquainted with Frederic Wil-

liam I ; and had ever since kept up a correspondence with him. He says, in one of his letters, that he had, from a youth, shewn his fidelity and devotedness to the king ; and in another place, that a royal missive, received after a long pause, had, as it were, called him to life again. If he was far from the king, he would not neglect any means to preserve his favour : he would send him delicacies for his kitchen, Italian truffles, "very nice thrushes" from Dresden ; and especially, he would procure for him the much-desired sight of gigantic soldiers, whom he got, for the greater part, from the heyduks of Raiz. When he then made his appearance himself, he was just the man whom the king wanted. As he had served in many campaigns, and often been employed in diplomatic business,—as, for instance, at the congress of Utrecht,—he possessed the most varied knowledge of the world as it then was. His conversation was amusing, as well as instructive. He had some congenial qualities with the king: great frugality, unexceptionable conduct with regard to women, regularity in religious observances, unwearied activity, whether in business, in travelling, or in hunting. There was no one whom Frederic William liked better to have with him, during his long sittings at the dinner-table, or in the evening over his beer and tobacco. This was of so much the greater importance, as Seckendorf, notwithstanding all his display of single-mindedness and open-heartedness, prized above everything the merit for which prince Eugene praises him,—that of being

a skilful negociator. I do not know whether a position like his, in which one is obliged to do justice to two opposite parties, does not render necessary a versatility too great to be consistent with a sincere regard for truth. Seckendorf does not, perhaps, in the numerous letters which are extant of him, appear as the deviser of intrigues and perfidies; yet he sees them everywhere, and does not merely guard against them, but tries to take advantage of them; under disguise, as much as possible, he pursues his aim with cautious pertinacity, circuitously and adroitly. He is a character with whom we shall meet on many more occasions.

It was then by no means purely accidental that he was walking on the banks of the Spree.

They were well aware at Vienna of the unpleasantness, and even danger, which would result, if ever there was a breach with Prussia.

Frederic William was much too simple-minded and frank, to think of trying to compass his end by a show of hostility. Disaffected and vexed, because he thought himself ill-used, he quite naturally took that threatening attitude; but by these means he, after all, obtained that at Vienna they paid greater regard to him than they had done hitherto. If ever in the treaty with Spain a great Roman Catholic combination had been intended by them, it became soon evident that this object was not attainable. It happened, amongst other things, that they met from the king of Poland with greater difficulties than they had expected.

Owing to both of these reasons, the court of Vienna resolved upon an approach towards the king of Prussia. Already, in January 1726, it opened friendly communications with him, commending him for having in the Ostend affair exhibited such good and patriotic feeling; and now, Seckendorf, who was just staying on his estate of Meuselwitz, had been commissioned by prince Eugene to go to Berlin, and tell the king, that it depended only upon him, whether he would be on terms of friendship and harmony with the emperor.

General Seckendorf had this good fortune, that the prince to whom he was sent, forestalling his endeavours, shewed of himself that disposition which the envoy was to call forth.

The king, who bore his thoughts always upon his tongue, asked immediately, after the first exchange of compliments, whether Seckendorf did not take him to be a good Hanoverian? and when the latter answered in the affirmative, Frederic William went on to say: "General, on the word of an officer, I am a better Imperialist than a Hanoverian." He spoke most unreservedly about the matter, and would not object to Seckendorf's reporting this to prince Eugene. "If the emperor," said he, "would only support him in his lawful demands, and treat him as was his due, and especially spare him unseemly chancery decrees, he would publicly espouse the side of the emperor." A great, and it may perhaps be said a lucky, event, implied in a few words!

In the summer and autumn of the year 1726, and

during the first months of the following year, the aspect of Europe was very warlike.

Ripperda, a vain-glorious babbler, as well as a bold schemer, could not maintain his ground in Spain. Yet his very fall, as he took refuge in the house of the English ambassador, but was pursued and arrested there by an *alcalde*, made matters worse with England. In the West Indian seas, an English fleet made its appearance, which prevented the galleons from venturing out with their cargoes of silver. On the other hand, English ships were shot at in a Spanish harbour, and all commerce between the two nations suspended. After angry notes had been interchanged for some time, at last a Spanish army advanced against Gibraltar; the leader of which, the marquis de las Torres, boasted that he would, within six weeks, clear the faithful kingdom of the settlement of heretical foreigners. The siege was opened Feb. 27th, 1727.

In all this England saw the working of Austrian intrigue; and, indeed, the imperial ambassador *Königs-egg*, exercised the greatest influence in Spain. He did not deny that he had advised the enterprise against Gibraltar; he corresponded with the inland authorities;—their ill-feeling towards the emperor grew daily more intense and envenomed. The Dutch and the English agreed to take the ships of the Ostend company wherever they should find them, and then to see what the emperor would do next. One of the most confidential servants of George I told the Prussian resident (Dec. 1726), that if the emperor would not

give up that commercial company, war would break out against him, as sure as he was standing before him. At the opening of parliament, Jan. 28th, 1727, the king charged the courts of Vienna and of Madrid with entertaining the intention of placing the pretender on the English throne; and when the imperial ambassador published a memorial against it, in which he distinguished between nation and government, principally addressing himself to the former, he raised a general storm against himself. The two houses gave him to understand, that evasive statements and artful negotiations never would lull them* into a false security. Hereupon, this ambassador had to leave London; and the English ones were recalled from Vienna and Ratisbon. In order to be prepared for any contingency, imperial troops were sent to the Netherlands.

It may be that these demonstrations were neither so formidable nor so seriously meant as they looked; but apprehensions were felt, lest, as the first stroke is often decisive, an accident should bring the general differences to an outbreak.

A plan was devised by which in the north and in the east, an army of Danes, Swedes, Hanoverians, and

* "If time shall evince, that the giving up the trade of this nation to one power, and Gibraltar and Port Mahon to another, is made the prize and reward of imposing upon this kingdom a popish pretender, what indignation must this raise in the breast of every Protestant Briton!"—The Parliamentary History of England, vol. viii, 524.

Hessians, under English and French auspices, should take the field and invade Silesia, just as had once been done in the thirty years' war.

On the other hand, they conceived at Vienna the device of attacking the king of England in his Hanoverian possessions, knowing well how much he had them at heart.

Both parties hoped to gain over the king of Prussia: England and France, in consequence of the treaty of Hanover; and the emperor, as being his liege lord. Prince Eugene wished to find out, by means of Seckendorf, what share might be most acceptable to him of the neighbouring countries, which, according to all human probability, would soon become hostile.

These were not, however, the thoughts of the king of Prussia. He drew nearer to the emperor, and made with him, as we shall presently see, (in the same year, 1726), a previous agreement; but when the latter proposed to him that he should give his adhesion to the treaty of Vienna, and join the alliances which had followed upon it,—for instance, that with Russia,—this was quite foreign to the policy of Frederic William. He did not wish to change his party in order to rob his ancient allies of a portion of their country by leaguings with their enemies. During the fluctuations of his mind, and of the negotiation, he, on the contrary, formed the idea, not only of remaining neutral himself, but also of not allowing hostilities to break out between the different powers. The king of England was to promise him, not to undertake anything

against the hereditary countries of the emperor in the empire, particularly Silesia or Bohemia; on the other hand, the latter was to pledge himself not to attack the Hanoverian possessions. Let war break out in other parts, he would maintain peace in his own neighbourhood.

With these instructions, he sent, in February 1727, one of his officers, Von Polenz, to England. The duchess of Kendal uttered some slight reproaches, which became her very well, about the fickleness of the king of Prussia. George I referred to France, which he had to consult before he could give a decisive answer; but it was to be perceived in him, and those about him, that the offer was exceedingly agreeable to them; for they had already been afraid of a still closer connexion between Prussia and the emperor. A weight seemed to be taken from the heart of the English, as well as of the German ministers. "They were as happy," said the Prussian resident, "as if they had been born anew."

— Less welcome was the offer at Vienna, where it was objected that king George I might attack the emperor in Italy also, or in the Netherlands, whilst the emperor could nowhere get at him but in his Hanoverian possessions, and there it was possible to do it most effectually; and that Prussia could not wish imperial fiefs like Milan, Mantua, or the Burgundian circle, to be attacked, without the emperor being allowed to lift a hand against it in other parts of the empire.

Nor did they approve of this proposition at Ver-

sailles. They said that the emperor would thereby be at liberty to turn his arms against France. But these very objections show how well devised it was.

Many other circumstances were added to this: the death of the empress Catherine I; the opposition which the alliance with Spain everywhere met with in the empire. The emperor would have been brought into a very dangerous predicament, if, whilst his allies fell off, his antagonists had remained closely united. But by the conduct of Prussia, these also were warned of their own danger; and it cannot be doubted but that Frederic William by his proceedings very greatly contributed to call forth a disposition for peace. While the outbreak of war was still expected, in the spring of 1727 negotiations for peace were begun in earnest, and the month of May had not quite passed before the preliminaries were settled.

This was one of the first effects which the rise of the military power, and the political independence of Prussia had had upon Europe. It prevented the hostile conflict on the German territory of the powers which were at variance about the maritime and continental balance.

O that—may we be allowed to take this retrospective glance—such a one had existed during the thirty years' war! Then would neither the Roman Catholic Austrian power, with the support of Spain, have overrun the north of Germany, nor the German-Swedish army, and the French, and sometimes English influence have advanced there. Indeed, religious passions

were at that time by far more violent, and, so to speak, more wild; but it is well known how often political interests were combined with them. The world had now come to this, that the latter kept the hostility of the former in check. A great state cannot possibly rest on one exclusive confession of faith. It requires for its existence a number of agencies which are independent of religious truth. If we (Germans) had had to fight with each other again, it must have been done, not for the sake of religious controversies, which are not thus to be settled, and still less on account of foreign quarrels, however nearly the latter touched the points at issue in Germany, with which they tried to connect themselves. If ever it was unavoidable, at least only the domestic political interests of the German powers must have been the cause.

As to those which might have been disputed between Prussia and Austria, these two states were just engaged in settling them.

TREATIES OF WUSTERHAUSEN AND BERLIN.

Already in the year 1726, as mentioned before, negotiations had been most seriously and successfully carried on.

The point upon which everything turned, and everything depended, was the acknowledgment of the Pragmatic Sanction. A greater advantage could not at that time have been gained for the house and monarchy of Austria, than that, in the first place, one of the most ful princes of the empire had guaranteed

that settlement, and that his example had then been followed by the others. Yet neither the one nor the other could possibly have been attained to, if the emperor had insisted on marrying his daughter to a Spanish prince. A meeting of some of the most influential princes of the empire had been held at Mannheim, in which they expressly protested against it. Frederic William too would not hear of any other but the German Austrian branch, and there were always assuring answers given him concerning that point. Under this supposition, he declared himself ready to acknowledge the order of succession, yet he had also a concession to ask in exchange. He considered his consent to be given of his own free-will, and it seemed to him fair and just to ask, for so great a service, another in return. He made the guarantee of his claims to the inheritance of Juliers and Berg the condition. It was not, however, his intention entirely to exclude Palatine Sulzbach, which enjoyed a most extensive connexion and support; he wished to leave to it Juliers, and to content himself with Berg. The imperial court was to pledge itself that it would induce the Palatine houses to agree to this compromise. Frederic William declared that only in case of this fair, just, and moderate request being granted, could he consent to the continuance of the commenced negotiations.

We see that the greatest interests of both of these princely houses were at stake;—for Austria, that of the preservation of the monarchy in its present extent; for Prussia, that of the acquisition of a con-

siderable province, on the strength of rights which had been reserved long since. If the two were to go hand-in-hand, an agreement settling those points must be concluded.

And the declaration which Seckendorf, who, in the meanwhile, had been to Vienna, brought back from thence, at least shewed the greatest willingness to effect such an arrangement. The emperor was ready to undertake the negotiation with the Palatine prince, according to the king's propositions; and if, after a term to be fixed by the latter, he should not succeed in it, he would treat with him about some other indemnification.

This was all that they could for the present have expected at Berlin.

The king stipulated that the treaty must be concluded within six months; and only made the condition, that the emperor should negotiate, not with others, who thought that they also had claims, but with the Palatine prince alone. Hereupon he signed, Oct. 12, 1726, at Wusterhausen, a treaty in which he now, for his own part, acknowledged the succession. But it is easy to see that, properly speaking, this was no final settlement; but only the basis on which a future agreement was to be founded. The king, as well as his ministers, declared repeatedly, that the convention was not to have any force until the compromise concerning Berg had been carried into effect.

Even in this shape, it was not without importance. The king was happy to see that, in the affairs of the

empire, he was treated with much greater delicacy and regard than formerly. The complaints on the subject of religion ceased. For Austria it was a considerable advantage that Prussia allowed herself to be induced to keep neutral.

But with those old traditional forms, which were then everywhere in use, and especially in the empire, it may be easily imagined, that an affair like that of Juliers and Berg, could, in that stipulated half-year, be scarcely set on foot, much less concluded. After some time, notice was given, at Vienna, to the Prussian court, that the Palatine of Neuburg could not now be induced to enter into any compromise. It is evident that, under these circumstances, the treaty of Wusterhausen could likewise no more be considered as being in force.*

But in the meanwhile the general affairs had not become more settled.

When the preliminaries were agreed upon, it was, after all, found impossible actually to conclude peace on such a basis. Congresses were formed and dissolved without result.

It seemed, in many instances afterwards, as if the hostilities which, in spite of every attempt to make peace, still continued between Spain and England, and in which the latter also suffered very severe losses from the Spanish privateers, would lead to a general

* Marginal note of the king in the minutes: "In case the compromise should not be effected, this alliance is null and void." The treaty printed in Dumont, viii, 139, is forged.

war. The French were called upon by the English government, in fulfilment of their engagements, to invade Spain. As in London, the obstinacy of Philip V was still attributed to the influence of the emperor, care was taken, in order that every contingency might be provided against, to conclude treaties with Hesse and Brunswick for the hire of troops, and to keep up the closest alliance with Sweden. The far-sighted helmsman who then principally directed the foreign relations of the imperial house, perceived yet another chance which might occur. It seemed to him, that France was purposely hindering the reconciliation between England and Spain, and the settlement of the actual differences ; waiting only for a convenient moment to undertake an attack on Lorraine, or perhaps against Italy, in the common Bourbon interest, which now again became prominent.*

Whichever of these events might happen, Austria was in the greatest need of a strong and trustworthy ally like the king of Prussia ; and she did not, for a moment, slacken in her attempts to gain him over.

In the face of the danger threatening from England, the plan was resolved upon, of proposing to the king, as an equivalent for his claims to Berg, an increase of territory from the lands then to be conquered. There would, in this case, have been the advantage of keeping the Palatine house on the side of the emperor.

* Eugene to Sinzendorf, October 20, 1728.—Works, vi, 114.

I do not think that Seckendorf, who had been enjoined to proceed with the greatest caution, did ever make, unreservedly, such a proposal. In June 1727, he merely declared that the emperor, who still hoped, if it were at all possible, to conclude the negotiations concerning Berg, wished to hear other devices also which might turn out for the king's pleasure and satisfaction in times of war and peace, and to cement an inseparable friendship. The king did not, however, enter upon this. He answered, that he would be very glad to have the friendship of the emperor : as to Berg, however, that was an acquisition to which he had a right before God and man ; he could fight for it with a good conscience ; to incur remote obligations was not to his taste.

Hereupon, whilst at the same time Sulzbach attached itself closer and closer to France, the old litigation about the inheritance was once more taken into formal consideration at Vienna. Seckendorf, who was there in the beginning of the year 1728, as he says himself, read anew the voluminous documents, together with the president of the Aulic Council, Count Wurmbrand ; and, concerning some uncertain points, applied for explanations to Berlin. In the beginning of May, he returned to the latter capital. In his credentials it is stated, that he should assure the king of the sincere desire of the emperor to unite more closely with him, and to advance, as much as possible, the interests of his royal and electoral house. He himself made to the king, during

his first audience at Potsdam, such communications with regard to Berg, that the latter did not doubt but that he should now succeed in getting the inheritance, if the affair were judiciously taken in hand.

With solemn cordiality he exhorted Ilgen once more to exert himself, and to crown all the good services which he had done, for so many years, to the house of Brandenburg, by the acquisition of Berg.

Ilgen and his colleague, Borceke, had for a long time been of opinion, that the best and surest way of realizing the claim, was the friendship of the emperor, —provided only that the latter were in earnest.

And the propositions which Seckendorf brought forward in his first conference with them, May 12, 1728, were perfectly to the point.

He stated, that if the king guaranteed the succession of the elder archduchess to all the hereditary countries of Austria, and engaged to defend it with the power of arms, the emperor, in return, would help the king to get the duchy of Berg. It was very clearly felt in Berlin what a responsibility was incurred by a guarantee which had, until now, been acknowledged neither by the empire, nor by the European powers ; but the advantage offered in exchange was deemed so substantial, that they did not hesitate to enter upon it. The only question was, in what form the engagement of the emperor concerning the duchy of Berg should be made, and what conditions should be attached to it.

It was not wished to bring the matter to issue at

law, as the decision might have possibly been given against Prussia ; a political negotiation was therefore the only thing to be thought of.

Nor was any good to be expected from a renewed attempt to bring about a compromise with the palatine of Sulzbach, as an unsuccessful one had only just been made, and that house had now found support among foreign powers.

The expedient was devised, that the emperor,—who was himself grandson of Philip William, by his eldest daughter Eleonora,—should declare himself as the rightful heir; and then, sharing his claims between Sulzbach and Prussia, assign Juliers to the former, and the duchy of Berg to the latter.

It would have perhaps been better to have avoided this mode of proceeding. To those who approved of it, it was objected in Berlin, then, and ever afterwards, that the transfer of the imperial claim could not have added to that of Prussia, as the latter had been repeatedly acknowledged by the emperor as the best of all. The main point was the promise of the emperor, that the king should enter into the possession and enjoyment of Berg, and be most vigorously maintained in it.

One condition the emperor wished to add to his concession: whilst assigning the duchy to the king, he would have been glad to preserve the town of Düsseldorf to the Palatine family. But the king would not hear any mention of a province which had no capital, and he refused to enter upon such engage-

ments as were expected from him, unless he got that place also. Seckendorf said at length, that since the horse was given away, the difficulty about the bridle might also be overcome. Nothing was mentioned in the treaty, but that the emperor should have the right, if necessary, to introduce troops or artillery into Düsseldorf; concerning the cession itself, no doubt was raised, either with regard to the town, or to the province. The Prussian ministers expressed their apprehension, lest the elector palatine should, as his lieutenant in his life-time, appoint the prince of Sulzbach, to whom he intended to leave the country; so that it would be difficult to displace him. Seckendorf replied, that, if at that time there were a dozen of counts-palatine at Düsseldorf, the emperor would be bound by the treaty to drive every one of them out of the town. Prince Eugene also declared, that if the contingency occurred, the king might with certainty expect the duchy; and that a lieutenancy, which might then exist, should not prevent him from taking possession in any of the forms which the law provides.

One more difficulty was raised. The case was supposed, that the Aulic council (the decision of which the emperor could not so unceremoniously command) might neither acknowledge the right of Prussia, nor even that of the emperor, but pronounce in favour of Sulzbach. Should the king then have to content himself with getting nothing at all?

It was represented that Prussia took upon herself onerous obligations, which must be of the greatest

immediate benefit for the imperial house. It would be a bad treaty, if the advantages which were granted in return were not clearly defined. It was therefore demanded, that the emperor should in such an emergency promise an equivalent.

Was this not also fair, when it is considered that Prussia granted support which profited the imperial family, and that Charles VI, on his part, merely charged himself with an obligation which was, from its very nature, inherent in his authority as emperor?

This matter was discussed in various conferences, sometimes in Berlin, sometimes in Wusterhausen, and sometimes in Britz, where Ilgen resided, who, however, at that time was already on his death-bed. Yet, neither his illness, nor his death, stopped the progress of the business. One day, the other Prussian minister, Borcke, actually brought affairs to such a point, that Seckendorf declared himself ready to adopt an article, which he designates as the most secret of all, and by which the emperor should be bound, in that case, to grant the king of Prussia an equivalent from his own possessions.*

I do not know whether this might not have been attained during the dangers of war which, just towards

* The *articulus secretissimus*, as Seckendorf proposed it, runs as follows: "If, contrary to all expectation, the commission, or the Aulic council, should give judgment against his royal majesty in Prussia, or also against his Roman, imperial, and catholic majesty in the affair of Juliers and Berg; his Roman, imperial, and catholic majesty shall and will be bound to give his royal majesty an equivalent *ex propriis*."—Orig. Docum. of about 11th December, 1728.

the end of the year 1728, appeared once more very imminent; and whether, on the whole, it would not have been best so, as definite stipulations always are, which admit of no further doubt. But Seckendorf had scarcely given the declaration, when he repented of it again, and tried every means to undo it.

If it was to be stated, in what matter Seckendorf had ever shewn that personal influence with the king of Prussia of which so much has been talked, it may be said that it was in this instance.

He represented, that a case like the supposed one was never to be expected. In a short time the inheritance would fall in, since the youngest of the brothers of Neuburg was already sixty-four years old. Then the king would enter into the possession of Berg and Ravenstein, and derive a couple of hundred thousand dollars' revenue from it, and the emperor was obliged in the clearest terms by the treaty, to protect him in it. Who would stir up the litigation which had been dormant for a hundred years? And suppose that this were done, the king had so good a right, that he had no adverse sentence to fear. But, even granted that such a sentence were pronounced, who would dare to execute it against the emperor and the king? Seckendorf asserted, that Ilgen also had at last been of this opinion. And the main argument on which he insisted was this,—that it must necessarily be the unalterable desire of the court of Vienna to have Prussia for a friend, which he demonstrated so plausibly, that the king was perfectly convinced. Although

otherwise so jealous in demanding clear and indisputable terms with regard to future contingencies, Frederic William at this time resolved to forbear mentioning an equivalent. It seemed impossible to him, that Austria should ever separate from his alliance.

Borcke was by no means so confident as the king. He had an express warrant (*décharge*) made out, as evidence that the king had authorized him to yield in this point, as he did not choose to make himself responsible for it.

Thus, on the twenty-third of December 1728, the treaty, designated as the Perpetual Alliance, was signed at Berlin. King Frederic William, who had for so long a time maintained a mistrustful, even half-hostile attitude towards Austria, returned to the policy of his father. With express reference to the first and second article of the Crown treaty, he renewed the guarantee then pledged for all the imperial hereditary countries, as well within as without the empire, according to the succession settled in April 1713, the Pragmatic Sanction in favour of Maria Theresa. He promised, for the maintenance of it, to supply, if it were necessary, a subsidiary force of 10,000 men, which might serve also in Hungary, though not in Italy; but yet, should the emperor be attacked there, might be employed for the protection of other provinces. He also engaged to uphold in the empire the prerogatives of the imperial authority, particularly that of the emperor as supreme judge, and, in general, to act in perfect concert with him, as well within as without the empire, and even

to give his vote in the election for a king of Rome to the prince, whom the emperor should marry to his daughter and heiress. Only one reservation did the king make. He wished not to be bound to anything, if the emperor gave the hand of his daughter to Don Carlos, or to any other prince, not a German. "No Spaniard," it is said in one of his marginal notes, "no Frenchman, but a German, we want." That he pronounces to be his true old German patriotic will. And also the article itself designates a prince, who was sprung from the ancient princely blood of the German empire.

The emperor, on the other hand, ceded his claims to Berg, without excepting the town of Düsseldorf, to Prussia, and declares his consent, that on the decease of the three brothers of Neuburg without male heirs, the king should assert these rights as well as his original ones "in possessorio et petitorio"; and, consequently, that he should therefore take possession, even in the case of the lieutenancy having been previously entrusted to a prince of Sulzbach. The emperor also pledged himself to support the king of Prussia, should the latter be attacked, with a considerable subsidiary force.* In all important affairs, especially the Polish, he promised confidentially to confer with him.

* The treaty, Dec. 23, 1728, in Förster, Frederic William I, "Book of Documents," ii, 215, but from a copy which is incorrect, as well on the whole, as in particulars. The four articles at the conclusion appear in the original as the *articuli secretissimi*, and then follows yet an *articulus separatus* taken from the treaty of

At this point they at length arrived in the course of events, and of the manifold turnings of the negotiation.

We have already alluded to, and will not repeat it, the merit of Frederic William in maintaining peace among the great powers, when war seemed inevitable, which he had done, although the nature of his own state was quite military.

But it is altogether a different question, whether the king's policy was at every stage the right one; whether he did not hasten too rashly into the league with Hanover, so that he was soon afterwards obliged to desist from it; and whether the new league with Austria was quite consistent with the interests of his kingdom?

This alliance afforded the great advantage of uniting the strongest German energies, and renewing the relations of peace and mutual confidence between the two religious parties. For the particular interests of Prussia, it was of the greatest value that the empire acknowledged and guaranteed her claims of succession to Berg. But, on the one hand, the obligation which Prussia took upon herself, in return, of defending the Austrian settlement, which was contested by the whole of Europe, was infinitely more important; and then it was something, after all, that the friendship of Prussia was to the house of Austria of immediate benefit; whilst every gain which Prussia had to look for, lay merely in the vague hopes of a distant future.

Wusterhausen. The ratifications were exchanged Feb. 3, 1729. The ministers expressed their wish, that the treaty might turn out for the glory of his majesty, and for the benefit of his house. The king wrote on their memorandum, "May God give his blessing!"

The treaty was become as momentous for the ulterior destinies of the two powers, as that agreement concerning Schwiebus.

In the first place, king Frederic was led by this matter into the most disagreeable differences with his nearest relations, which, at the same time, affected his own family; or rather, the conclusion of the treaty was itself a crisis in them.

We are the more bound to mention them, as the heir-apparent, now growing up to manhood, who has attracted the general interest of the world to himself, played a part in them, and made himself talked of for the first time.

YOUTH OF FREDERIC II.

Frederic William had been married at an uncommonly early age, in order to extend as soon as possible the older branch of his house, the other being formed by the half brothers of his father. He had also, during the first years of his marriage, three children, of whom, however, a daughter only remained alive. The two boys died. The Prussian crown had no heir, when, on the 24th January 1712, another son was born to him, who was indeed likewise of a delicate and often ailing constitution, but, as it was at once remarked, of great vitality.*

* Confer the letters of Frederic I, communicated from the Hanoverian records in Ledeburg's "New Archives," iii. In the letter of notification, Jan. 24, 1712, the king says, that God had replaced to him the loss of his grandson, who had died last year, and presented him "this morning, at half-past eleven," with a well-formed grandson and prince of Prussia and Orange.

The world received him in the spirit of the olden time, and of the then existing state of things.

The members of the household have handed down the tradition, how the acquirer of the crown, Frederic I, who in the birth of a prince saw the fulfilment of his prayers, amid the peal of the bells which announced the event to the town, extended his hands over the new-born babe, recommended the life of the child, and the future of his country, to God anew; and, his mind diving into the depth of eternal destinies, did not rise before he might think to have also this prayer fulfilled: and thus thanks were offered to God in all the churches, that, after many afflicting bereavements, he had once more strengthened and established before all the world the house and the realm of his anointed.

Quite in the spirit of the grand alliance, which for a quarter of a century had presided over the policy and the destinies of the country, the States-general and the emperor Charles VI were invited to be sponsors.* It is characteristic of the old familiar and homely way, that the former made to the young prince of Prussia and Orange,—for this title was given him in remembrance of his grandmother, the daughter of Frederic Henry of Orange—a present, just as wealthy relations might have done, of two golden goblets, and a golden casket, with a letter containing an annuity of 4,000 florins. The emperor, whilst accepting the invitation

* There are, besides, letters of thanks extant for being chosen godmothers, from the electress Sophia, Hanover, Feb. 3, and from the duchess Eleonora, Luneburg, Feb. 6.

to be godfather,—on the offering of which, success against his enemies, and for his counsels and actions, had been wished to him,—expresses the hope that the good understanding which had ever been kept up between his and the royal Prussian house, would last to the end of the world. With this meaning, at the christening, to the Hohenzollern name a Habsburg-Burgundian one was added. The prince was named Charles Frederic, although it was resolved commonly to call him Frederic alone.* The young prince was right solemnly dedicated to continue an alliance which he was actually destined to break. Allegory loves at the cradle of a hero to collect omens of his future fortunes: history finds rather the contrary.

Frederic William confided the care of the first years of his son to the same hands under which his own childhood had thriven. To a Frenchwoman, who, without male assistance, had managed to effect the emigration of her family in order to escape from religious oppression—Madame de Rocoulle—the honour belongs of having superintended the first education, upon which so much depends, of two of the most energetic princes who have ever sat on a throne.* She did not at least commit the fault, which so many others in her

* An authentic record has not yet been found about it. But what makes the fact historically certain is a letter of the emperor, his godfather, dated January 6, 1721, and directed to "his highness Charles Frederic, crown prince of Prussia and electoral prince of Brandenburg."

† She was sous-gouvernante under Madame de Kamecke.—
"Comme elle ne parle que Français, elle à appris sa langue aux

situation may be charged with; she never tried to correct the self-will of the pupils entrusted to her care.

Thus also General Finkenstein, who had been appointed by king Frederic William as principal governor of the prince, when the latter was in his seventh year, had been attached in the same capacity to the father himself, in his youth, for several years. He was one of those rare men from whose virtue the tongue of slander shrinks; of quiet industry, a good manager, and a splendid builder, a pious Christian, and, above all, a brave soldier. He had once in France, whither he had been conducted as a prisoner of war, trailed for some years a pike as a common soldier; and there, in a foreign country, raised himself by bold and fortunate achievements of valour. When Louis XIV turned his arms decisively against Germany, he returned to the colours of his country, and did not a little contribute to the lustre of the Prussian arms. At Höchstedt, he vied with Prince Leopold; at Malplaquet, he was the foremost to scale the French entrenchments. By his example Frederic afterwards proved the maxim, that he only knew how to command who had learned how to obey.*

As under-governor, the king joined to him Lieutenant-Colonel Kalkstein, whom also he had known in

enfants du roi, qui la parlent avec la même facilité que la langue allemande.—Pöllnitz, Letters, i, 35. Cf. Erman, "Mémoires sur Sophie Charlotte."

* "Qui ne scait obéir, ne saura commander."—Art. de la guerre. Chart premier.

he understands as a brave soldier. However trustworthy the king seemed it advisable to give him similar instructions, which happened to be very characteristic of himself. Its basis is that which had been laid down for his own education : but he changed it according to his own mind as it then was.

It had always existed in him I do not know whether more of disgust or pity, that the young German princes were told so much of the antiquity of their houses, of the illustriousness of their blood, and enjoined with the display of pompous titles, without having the actual duties of life pointed out to them ; he therefore strictly forbade such practice. Every one who saw the prince was to be warned not to flatter him. If there was one who nevertheless did it, he should be denounced to him. And the strictest care ought to be taken not to make his son elated with pride. The pomp of the princely phrase, "our beloved son's, the emperor's highness," "our beloved son's, the prince's highness," with which Frederic I. flattered himself; the mention of the "noble country" and the "millions of men" living in it; Frederic would be reduced into the simple expressions, "my country," "the whole of the country;" and, instead of the old style of "we" was supplied by the word "I." To the old instructions the respect and attention now attached to, which the prince owed to his father and his commands, Frederic William adds that the prince ought not to be slavish. "I

will be to them with his own hands, that the p

ought to have confidence in him, ought to consider him as his best friend, and to conceive a brotherly love for him. This was what they should impress into his heart. Only the most necessary objects of instruction belonging to practical life have any value for him. He condemns the study of genealogy, which had formerly been recommended. Instead of the history of the electoral and princely house of Brandenburg, he wants Prussian history only, combined with knowledge of politics; geography the prince is to learn with the maps in his hands, and he is to acquire perfect skill in arithmetic.

It is very remarkable that the king absolutely forbids Latin for him; the regulation of the Golden Bull, which enjoined the knowledge of this language for an electoral prince, was of no more moment. He is not to be troubled with methodical grammar. It would be enough for him to acquire by practice a fluent French and German style.

And if we now ask further, to what objects the education of the prince was to be directed, we meet with three principal points.

As his governors were two distinguished soldiers, so he was principally to converse with officers, and to conceive the desire of glory and bravery, and love also for the soldier. It was to be most strongly inculcated in him, that he would be a despised man if he were not a soldier.

Secondly, he was to be made a good manager. He must be, imbued with disgust for pomp

and useless expenditure, and still more for gambling, and every sort of prodigality.

Lastly, he was to become a good evangelical Christian. The futility of the Roman Catholic doctrine was to be set forth to him as forcibly as possible; but as for the condemned sects of Arianism, Socinianism, and also the opinions of the Quakers, it would be best for his teachers not to speak of them at all.

This religious tendency is particularly conspicuous in the arrangement of his time for the day (prescribed in the year 1725), in which it shews itself with all the overstrained zeal of those times.

The prince was to get out of bed early and at once, and immediately to repeat a short prayer on his knees: after he had hurriedly dressed himself, and taken his breakfast with tea in a few minutes, a long prayer was to be said, kneeling, in presence of all the servants, a chapter from the Bible to be read, and a godly hymn to be sung with a loud voice; a fencing lesson was to alternate with religious instruction. Besides this, the prince was to go with the king in the morning to the parade, and on Sundays to march with him at the head of his company to church. In some sort connected with this, was the strange method in which he was taught general history. He was made to read the "*Theatrum Europæum*," the first volume of which contains the religious wars.

It is evident, that Frederic William did not aim at a free developement of natural talents, nor at the acquirement of general knowledge: education and instruc-

tion had with him a fixed and definite purpose. He wished to make his son a man such as he himself was, and it almost seemed as if his method would succeed.

In February 1719, General Finkenstein reported, that the prince was diligently pursuing his studies, that, if it was fine weather, he went to the stables, mounted a horse, and would also visit the cadets, and shoot at the target. From these cadets a company was formed for him.

Of the prince also letters are extant,* in which, in a childish handwriting, but in such terms as an old captain would use, he gives his report of the state of his company, of which he sends in regular lists.

Or he mentions how far he has read in the "*Theatrum Europæum*"; and it is quite in keeping with the sentiments which he may thence have imbibed, that he sends to his father a satire against pope and pretender which had come to his hands during the absence of Frederic William. Another time, he discloses to his father that the queen knew where to find some capital recruits, only she must not be apprized that he, the prince, was the informer; or else he expresses his regret at not being able to attend a certain review, and to see the fine men of the king. Soon afterwards, similar ones are sent to him from his company, whom he gratefully accepts. He gives himself up heart and

* Some letters, for which evidently the hand of the prince was led, dated July 21 and 27, 1717, and directed to the king, can scarcely be called his. The earliest which he can be said to have written is dated February 21, 1719.

soul to military pursuits; in the castle a small arsenal with all sorts of arms was arranged for him. "My cradle," he once says, "was surrounded with arms. In the army I have been bred." Already the chase afforded him pleasure. He is delighted with a leash of hounds with which he courses hares; and in October 1720, he shot, as he himself tells, a partridge on the wing.

It seems as if, under his rule, everything would be exactly as it was under his father. Frederic also corresponded with prince Leopold about tall soldiers, about the trophies of the chase. Gundling, who enlivened the evening parties of the king with his style of learning, in which he, however, degenerated into buffoonery, dined also with the son, and right merry they were. In his letters, Frederic sometimes wrote the name of God with large initials. There is a small composition extant, dating from his ninth year, in which he sets forth, with much conviction, some high orthodox doctrines about God and Christ, and the suggestions of Satan. The psalm tunes are still pointed out for which he had a particular liking.

But it is not the design of nature and Providence, that the new generation should be exactly like those which have been before it, and that children should once more reproduce the ideas realized by the lives of their parents.

In those earliest letters, the young prince already exhibits traces of adroitness and subtlety, quite foreign to the disposition of his father. Very remarkable is

the little composition alluded to. The first sentiment of his own which Frederic ever wrote down ran thus: "One ought to have one's heart in the right place." Another maxim, which is found there, could scarcely have been expected from the father: "One ought not to love anything too strongly." Every word of the boy betrays the intellectual glance with which he regarded the world around him. Whoever saw him, recognized the strife of natural talent in his soul, and it was not to be expected, as a matter of course, that it should follow just the tracks of the father.

The man who had the greatest influence upon the peculiar developement of the growing youth, was his daily tutor, Duhan de Jardin.

He too was a French emigrant, whom Frederic William had once known as a gallant volunteer in the trenches of Stralsund, so that he might have thought him particularly fit to instruct the prince according to his own military views.

But Duhan had a more natural turn for study than for arms, and this was what he principally imparted to his pupil. Frederic himself has once, in a lively outburst of his feelings, described the relation in which his tutor stood to him. He thanks him especially for having broken through the bounds which narrowed his thoughts and aspirations, or, as he expresses it, the fence of his ignorance, within which his bashful innocence lay asleep. Duhan opened his eyes to a different sort of merit from that which formed the topic of prince Leopold's or his father's conversations. He

spoke to him of a princely glory, not to be gained by the sword; of a glory like that of Titus and the Antonines, and turned his attention from the tumultuous energy of the men of the "*Theatrum Europæum*," from the complicated strife of religious and political contests to that philosophy of contemplation which is possible in a life of tranquillity,—to thinkers and poets of antiquity, like Socrates and Horace.

What is attributed to the tutor, was also, without doubt, the natural effect of the influence made on the susceptible and inquiring mind of his pupil, by the ancient and modern authors with whom he had acquainted him.

As to a methodical course of instruction, Duhan was not capable of giving it. He knew little besides his mother-tongue. Instead of teaching the history of Brandenburg, he showed the prince how to make French verses.

There is nothing of so much moment to the life of a man in an age of advanced civilization, as the position which he takes with regard to its literature. Duhan effected,—what the genius of his pupil would most likely have inclined to without his impulse,—that he got a taste for reading.

In after times, Frederic remarked that one was never so well taught by men as by books; that the most instructive conversation was that with the dead, who spoke unbiassed; and that from the records of history we may read the judgment which we have to expect for ourselves. As in the life of individuals,

thus in the general life of mankind, there are stages of progress which are reflected in the corresponding developement of literature. The latter is the closest link between the intellect of the individual and the civilization, actual and past, of the whole race. Of decisive moment, therefore, for everybody, perhaps, is the point on which he forms that connexion.

In the Germans of that time, the feeling was alive that they were, in the freedom and ease of social intercourse, behind other nations, and especially behind their western neighbours, who had given them so many an impulse. It was not a bad definition which Father Bonhours gave, when he said that a fine mind was one which thought correctly, and searched deeply; yet possessing delicacy, and being at the same time comprehensive and clear, unassuming and prolific. From one of the earliest writings of Thomasius, we may see what a sensation this notion of an elegant mind and good taste produced in Germany: that author, indeed, began his career by adopting it as his starting point.

These qualities of French literature had gained the mind of Frederic also. He would now no more read any other than French books. He was captivated as well by their concise and witty mode of expression, for which he had himself a natural talent, as by all the views of life and the world's ways and doings, which they set forth.

And, as young people are wont to do, by the standard of these views he judged persons and things

about him. He thought that at the court of his father no one was to be found to whom he could allow the merit of a cultivated mind, unless it were somebody or other who was reading a good deal of French.

If we consider how powerfully young people are acted upon by the people and pursuits around them, especially by military men, and military life, the aversion which Frederic showed to his companions, and the state of things among which he was thrown, —more particularly as afterwards he exhibited much greater talent and taste for the achievements of war than for those of literature—would be most surprising, did we not know that the queen, his mother, abetted him in it.

Sophia Dorothea had never entered into the views of her husband. His simple and frugal household, utterly destitute of elegance and the refined enjoyments of life, did not satisfy her. She censured much of what the king undertook, and, indulgently allowing her two eldest children to do the same, directed their attention to the greater gaiety of foreign countries. Under the influence of sentiments congenial to his own,—for she too loved and patronized learning,—the impulse of that ambition, which is the attribute of cultivated minds, the prince began to look upon the strict and cramped routine of military life, as little more than a sort of pedantry, and to be rather disgusted than otherwise with parades and reviews. He thought, that it behoved a prince to care just as much for those intellectual pleasures,

which are afforded by music, the theatre, and cheerful society.

So much the more important it was for him, that in February 1728 he was permitted to see the court of Dresden.

The disagreements which had until now existed between Frederic William I and Augustus II, had been settled, and however different, even adverse their dispositions had previously appeared, yet it became evident by degrees, that there were many points also, which they had in common. Augustus exhibited, in his latter years especially, an increasing taste for the military, and Frederic William kept faithful to the old traditions of courts, in so far at least as he loved occasionally to be a party to long and plentiful banquets. Augustus II had established a particular society, (the Round Table), formed from the most confidential of his courtiers, of which he acted as patron. Frederic William, who entered as companion and brother, was soon afterwards acknowledged as compatron, with the rights of convoking the society and electing new members. Patron and Compatron were the titles, which the princes not only gave each other, but by which they were also designated among their most confidential servants. They made a compact in due form, according to which one should be allowed to come and see the other without ceremony, and even without previous notice, and take his dinner or supper at his royal host's, or at whosoever's house he pleased, without any regard to rank. But the principal thing,

after all, was well got up festivals, at which they entertained each other with much state and profusion. The first took place during the carnival of 1728, when the king and the crown-prince of Prussia made their appearance at Dresden. It would be useless to describe the festivities of which at that time special narrations were published in prose and in verse, many extracts from which were afterwards made. It is more worthy of remark, what impression that town of Dresden produced upon father and son. Frederic William admired the magnificence of that court in comparison with which the pomp of his father was a beggarly affair, and, if it were possible to make gold, he would have believed that the king of Poland possessed the secret. He compared the hunting department, the pheasant preserves, the orangery, the collections, (as, for instance, the green vault), with his own, and acknowledged that the former were by far superior. But he did not neglect to turn his attention to military matters. The fortress of Königstein, he deemed worth travelling a hundred leagues to see: on the other hand, he declared the arsenal of Dresden to be a thousand times worse than that of Berlin. Of the infantry, he found some of the regiments very good, others miserable. There were also many officers of merit; what, however, called forth his disapprobation, was the little esteem in which they were held; so that, as he says in a letter to the prince of Dessau, they were "paraded with the footmen." He thought it his duty to pay them, on his part, the honours

usual at Berlin, and tried to draw out the humblest ensign.

Would that we had a letter of the crown-prince equally full of detail! It would not have been perhaps stated in it, what the father says of himself, that temptation had not been wanting, yet that God had preserved him, and he was pure in his sight. For the young and gay prince, to whom the world was here for the first time opened without the constraint of home, the luxurious court, where the intercourse between the sexes had shaken off every check of modesty and decency, must have had a seductive charm.*

I could not mention names; but his good luck, or his genius, willed it, that he paid his homage to a lady, who, like himself, was fond of literature, and who confirmed him in his taste for poetry.

A lasting correspondence between the two courts arose from the superiority of the Saxon in the culture of music. The crown-prince and his elder sister had, as their mother said, a passion for that art.† At the

* To the romantic statements of his sister, I oppose the assurance of his brother. In an autograph notice of Augustus William, which unfortunately is only too short, it is said of Frederic, "*Jamais il n'a eu du penchant pour le sexe, et encore moins pour le mariage.*"

† Let us hear what the queen says. Suhm states, July 30, that she had thanked the king of Poland for his favour, "*en lui envoyant des gens de sa musique, et en lui permettant de les garder quelque tems.*" And then she continues: "*Vous savez la passion de mes enfans pour la musique, ils m'ont engagée à augmenter le nombre de mes musiciens, il me manque un homme comme Quantz; pourrais-je espérer que le roi qui a un si grand nombre d'habilles gens voulut me céder celui-là, je lui en aurais bien de l'obligation.*"

request of the queen, who spoke about the matter to his ambassador, Augustus II was so obliging as to allow his virtuosi Quantz and Weiss,—he did not wish entirely to part with them,—to make from time to time a longer stay at Berlin. Weiss taught the lute to the princess, and Quantz gave the prince lessons on the flute. It is well known with what consummate skill this inventive genius knew how to arrange, and then use this instrument. To Frederic this accomplishment was a source of infinite pleasure during the whole of his life. At this time he felt happy, when, parade and dinner being over, in the afternoon he could doff his uniform, put on his dressing-gown of gold brocade, and occupy himself with his books and his music.

He thus of necessity got into collision with the wishes and intentions, as well as with all the views of his father, and soon had to feel his displeasure.

The king rebuked the prince for not wishing to learn to ride and shoot better than he did. He taxed him with unmanliness and with effeminacy of manners. And with particular disgust he remarked, that Frederic shewed no disposition whatever to take upon himself the management of his affairs, and to superintend the expenditure of his own little household. He

The crown prince in particular, "*qui apprend à jouer la flute traversière avec un succès étonnant,*" wishes for Quantz, who is already present. Soon afterwards, the queen makes her acknowledgments that the king of Poland had for such a long time left to her four of his first musicians: "*qu'elle se servirait de la liberté que votre majesté lui avait donnée de faire venir de tems en tems Quantz.*"

therefore kept him so much the more strictly and niggardly, and the consequence was that the prince got into debt. And when on one occasion part of what he owed was paid, not without harsh words, Frederic did not consider himself bound to undeceive his father, who fancied that he had cleared off the whole.

And, in their opinions, concerning the highest things, as well as those of every day life, there arose an opposition between them.

Frederic William, although like the whole of his house of the Reformed confession, nevertheless took offence at one of the most important Calvinist tenets, the doctrine of absolute decrees,* as being contrary to those general common-sense views which altogether guided him; and, without inquiring into the connexion of the whole system, declared himself for the Lutheran belief concerning this point. The prince, on the other hand, conceived a decided predilection for this very doctrine, which has something profound and grand in it, and seemed also, in his own judgment, to be better proved by Scripture. For, indeed, the preachers who instructed him would not have ventured to tell him a word about it; but he was already independent enough to do without them.†

* In the autograph notes to the regulations, it is stated, that "they are not to make him a particularist, but he is to believe in the universal grace by Christ."

† In the records concerning the escape of the crown-prince, we find the statement of the court-preacher Andrea, that he had in-

He did not mind the trouble of looking through catalogues; but whenever he met with a title which pointed to this controversy, he would not fail to get the book, and having once taken an interest and even a party in the question, it did not cost him a great effort to venture upon authors like Jacques Basnage, by whom he then confirmed himself in his opinions.

Thus the frugal, soldier-like father, who in religious concerns clung fast to a simple formula of a practical tendency, met in his son with the opposition of a mind which was directed to literature and the fine arts, to profound knowledge and inquiry,—combined, however, with a disposition which loved to enjoy the pleasures of life. The king had no notion that these could lead to anything honourable and good; he only saw that they might beguile into evil ways, and he utterly condemned them.

The prince wished to undertake a longer journey,—perhaps in company with Kalkstein, who spoke to the king of it,—for his own instruction and amusement.

structed the crown-prince in accordance with the Holy Scripture, and the reformed confession of faith, particularly that of the elector John Sigismund, which he, the deponent, as well as all the court-preachers, in obedience to the orders of his royal majesty, had twice subscribed.—He had tried to direct the mind of the crown-prince to the grace of Christ, and to godly living. As to the decrees of God, he had abstained from treating of them, on account of the tender youth of the prince, and “only told him, that this matter was still too high for him, the crown-prince.” It was the “*Histoire de la Religion des Eglises Réformées*,” by Jacques Basnage, that the prince read.

But the king may have been afraid, lest he should then more thoroughly give into foreign manners and ideas, and alienate himself from his father. And so he wished to hear nothing more of it.

In summer and autumn 1728, an open breach took place between them. The prince complained, that the favour of his father seemed to have been changed into hatred. And yet, although he had examined himself, he found nothing to reproach himself with. The king replied to this by rating him for his effeminacy, saying, that he ought at least, for his father's sake, to behave differently, but that he only followed his own headstrong will.*

This does not, however, imply that his growing anger had weakened his fatherly love. About this time he mentions, in a letter to the prince of Dessau, an illness into which the prince had fallen. "As long as children are well," he remarks, "we do not know how we love them."

And such was still the feeling of Frederic himself, in spite of all their quarrels. There once occurred, soon after these unpleasant explanations, in October 1728, a scene between father and son, of which there is no parallel.

St. Hubert's day was celebrated at Wusterhausen by a great dinner. The prince sat opposite the queen, at the side of the Saxo-Polish ambassador Suhm, and repeated to him what he had often told him before,

* The letter dated Sept. 11, 1728, in Cramer, 33.

that he was not able to endure the slavery in which he had to live, asking, whether king Augustus II could not perhaps by his interest obtain for him leave to travel, merely that he might enjoy a little more liberty. Contrary to his natural disposition, but carried away by the habits of those dinner parties, he drank rather freely, and spoke so loud that he was heard across the table, and the queen became alarmed. This did not, however, hinder the prince from giving vent to his complaints about his grievances;—only, as often as he looked at his father, he felt a check, and stopped short, saying, “I love him for all that.” The queen had withdrawn, but the prince would not go before he had taken leave of his father. He drew the hand which the latter offered him across the table, covered it with his kisses, and, being once in this mood, went up to him, threw his arms round his neck, and sat upon his lap. Among those who were present, there was none who did not know how matters stood between them. Some cheered the prince; others had tears in their eyes. “All right,” said the king, “all right; only become an honest fellow.”* In the evening, in the smoking club, the incident was

* Letter of Suhm, Oct. 21, 1728, in the Record Office at Dresden. When the king, in June 1728, went to Prussia, he gave Kalkstein, at his request, a new instruction, in which the companions of the prince are selected, and his hours of study under the engineer, Major Senning, are fixed for the morning and afternoon (June 16). After the return of the king, Kalkstein applied to him, as well for his own discharge, as for that of Finkenstein. In the spring, 1729, Rochow was appointed as governor of the prince.

not mentioned, nor did the prince make his appearance; yet the king was never seen in better spirits.

Nevertheless, it is said, that there were people who told him, that it was all a sham.

Only too soon did the old misunderstanding return. In an instruction given by the king, March 1729, to Colonel Rochow, who was to accompany the prince as companion and friend, he repeats his former complaints that the prince had no taste for what was solid; that he was only thinking of idle pursuits; that he was careless of his person; that his head was full of empty pride and vanity. The colonel was to do his utmost to make him a smart fellow and a fine officer; and if he did not turn out well, it must be considered as a piece of ill luck.

On the other hand, Frederic himself liked to take under his protection those who had made themselves liable to punishment; and those who were well with the king, he treated with contempt.

The king fancied, when seeing him at a distance of thirty paces, that he could discern evil thoughts which rankled in his heart, and treated him accordingly. He used to tell him, that any other officer who did not like the face of the king, could retire from his service, but not so the prince, who was obliged to stay with him, and to "conform himself" to him, otherwise he would have a sad life of it.

He gave to his censure as much publicity as possible. He pronounced it, in the first place, before the members of his household, then before the officers of

the regiment, then before the generals. Instead of making any impression on the prince, it merely rendered his condition insufferable to him, and he began to entertain the wish to forsake the court, in defiance of his father.

What still hindered him from coming to any positive resolution, was the uncertain state of the relations with England, which affected the whole of Europe, and, as they interfered with his own marriage, also concerned himself most nearly.

The dynastic element of European history has here, as often elsewhere, the closest connexion with the general affairs. Let us therefore now direct our attention more particularly to those complicated transactions.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PRUSSIAN AND ENGLISH COURTS.

When Frederic William, in the year 1725, entered into an alliance with the king of England, his queen, as we have mentioned already, began at the same time to make negotiations for a fresh union of the two families.

In the first place, a marriage was spoken of between the eldest Prussian princess, Frederica Wilhelmina, and the heir-presumptive to the throne of England, Frederic, the son of the prince of Wales. The English nation seemed to wish for it; the resident minister was very much in its favour; king

daughter, whose heart was set on it, the best assurances.

Yet these were not binding, nor even were they committed to writing.* The opinion entertained in Berlin was, that the thing neither pleased the German ministers at Hanover, nor some others very near the person of George I. The latter prince only kept saying, that he ought not to be urged, that his own blood was dearer to him than all besides, that he could not change unripe things into ripe ones. He had thrown out a hope that he would send prince Frederic, who resided at Hanover, to Berlin, where he might pave the way for his future alliance by a more intimate personal acquaintance. However much the young prince was inclined to it, and of however great benefit it might have been for him to pass through the training of a stricter school under the eyes of the king of Prussia, yet it never took place. The rising political differences rather contributed to alienate people's minds from each other. When George I (1727) unexpectedly died on a journey to Hanover, nothing was yet settled about the matter.

It is a mistake to suppose that between his successor George II and Frederic William an old personal grudge had now broken out again.

An autograph instruction of the king of Prussia to

* Frederic William to Wallenrodt, 1727: "Whether his late Majesty, as Lord Townshend told you, had ever written to us on this subject, or given a positive promise concerning it, we do not remember."

his ambassador Wallenrodt lies before us, which expresses nothing but an anxious wish for a good understanding between them.

He repeats it in his promise, never to allow the German provinces of the king of England to be molested, or thrown into confusion; only the latter must not from thence attack the emperor, nor bring foreign troops into Germany. From a reason which applied to both parties, he urged upon him the necessity of trying to effect a settlement of the Sleswic affair. For otherwise, the emperor would gain an opportunity of taking up arms, whilst it was an old maxim of the princes of the empire not to give him one.

The scheme of a family alliance was so little abandoned, that on the contrary it was extended still further. For many years the two sisters-in-law,—the then queen of England, Caroline of Anspach, and the queen of Prussia—had talked between them of uniting the two families for ever by a double marriage, not only of the Prussian princess with the English heir-presumptive, but also of the Prussian crown-prince with an English princess. This project was now for the first time officially negotiated.

King Frederic William I was at that moment far from opposing it. He gave, on the 12th of August, 1727, express orders to his ambassador, Wallenrodt, to speak about it to the new queen.*

* "He might suggest the idea, that a double marriage between ours and the royal family of England would infallibly be the best and surest foundation of a stable and lasting good understanding between the two royal houses. This should be the starting point."

Only he made a stipulation quite consistent with his self-respect and his Prussian ambition. It had always appeared to him as if they were ever trying in England to use the relationship existing between the two houses as a motive for political alliance.* He wished to keep both these things asunder, and, first of all, to restore personal confidence. However many assurances he caused to be given concerning the German, and even the general affairs, he did not wish a new alliance to be talked of.†

As the object of all his policy, which he pursued with such unwearied energy, was to make himself independent of all foreign influence, nothing grieved him so much, as when some one tried to subject him to anything of the kind, or to sway him as one who had no sufficient weight of his own. The principal reason which had driven him from the league of Hanover, was that he suspected that there were other objects in view, besides those which were communicated to him. Even in his approach towards the imperial court, he did not really intend to make himself subordinate to it; on the contrary, he felt his ambition flattered, that a prince, who displayed such magnificent claims and privileges, was obliged so eagerly to

* For instance, if the congress of Cambray assembled, the Prussian ambassador, if there were any there, was not to oppose England.

† "Je veux savoir tous les secrets également comme le roi très Chrétien, et le roi de la Grande Bretagne, et régler avec eux tout ce qui se passera, et comme partie, mais pas en subalterne et inférieur, mais également comme les dits rois." [From a declaration of the year 1726.]

seek for his friendship. "I do not wish to boast," he once says; "but I have gained honour for the house of Brandenburg. Never, as long as I live, have I solicited alliances, never made the first offers to a foreign power. My maxim is, to hurt nobody, and not to let people tread upon my toes." That great political principle,—not to need anybody in order to be able to exist; not to conclude any alliance without exchanging advantage for advantage; he would not sacrifice to make a match for his children, however desirable it might be; and he wished to conclude the marriages, but without renewing the political alliance. In England, on the other hand, they insisted that the political and the family affairs were not to be separated. When the first overture was made to queen Caroline, who at the beginning of her husband's reign had a certain influence * in most matters, she indeed assured the ambassador (who was, however, speaking only in his own name), that she wished for nothing better than for the double marriage; that she did not know a more eligible wife than the Prussian princess, who had a fine understanding, and was very well bred; "but for God's sake, she adds, "let us not begin the romance by the end; let us first settle affairs, and then I may successfully work for the marriage."†

* "C'est la reine qui représente le premier ministre."—Remark of some English nobleman. His majesty, says the German report from which we quote this (Feb. 1728), will not allow the ministers, but her alone, to govern.

* "Ne commençons pas le Roman par la queue, ne commençons pas par la conclusion. Remettez premièrement les affaires."

Did it not really look as if the English court considered this marriage as a favour for which other concessions were to be made? This was enough to rouse the inmost soul of Frederic William. "If," says he, "the gentleman is worth the lady (meaning his daughter), the lady is worth the gentleman." To his ambassador, he answered, that it appeared as if he was to be as it were compelled to enter into new obligations, and as if it was thought that he could be brought to it by that marriage. But he went on to say, that he found no such advantage in it, as to sacrifice for it the interests of his house, or submit to irksome restraints. He expressed himself still more strongly to his ministers at home. He would not have hesitated rather to give his daughter to the duke John Adolphus of Weissenfels, or to any other insignificant German prince.

The disgust began in the point of honour, yet it was fostered by other circumstances.

Differences had arisen already on account of the will of George I, which his successor would not produce. Others followed, concerning the inheritance of that unfortunate duchess of Zell, the mother of George II, and of the queen of Prussia. Quarrels about boundary questions broke out, especially concerning Mecklenburg, some districts of which country the Hanoverians occupied as a security for the costs of a former execution, which had been taxed very high; and therefore the king of Prussia had got himself appointed as conservator. Another bone of contention

was East Friesland, which, in the event of an approaching vacancy, was to revert to Prussia, very little to the satisfaction of the Hanoverian minister. It was not by mere accident, that, towards the end of 1728, prince Frederic, now prince of Wales, was called up from Hanover to London. It was feared, lest he might go on his own account to Berlin, to see his intended bride.

As Frederic William just then entered into a treaty by which he formed such a close connexion with the emperor; and England—for the transactions had not yet led to any result—very strenuously opposed it, while the whole of Europe was still wavering between war and peace, it had even seemed for some moments as if the quarrel of these two nearly-related kings would break out into open hostility. The occasion was given by the insolence of some Prussian recruiting parties, such as had often happened before. But now, George II, who, in 1729, for the first time as king visited his German dominions, would no more tolerate these irregularities. Without so much as giving notice to the king of Prussia of his arrival, and still less having warned him, he ordered the Prussian soldiers who crossed his territories to be seized and imprisoned, and declared that he would not set them free until the Hanoverians, who had been enrolled in the Prussian service, were given up to him.

In Berlin this was not known by any official communication, but merely by the newspapers; and it may be easily imagined, what was the excitement of

the court and the army. George II, it was said, had not committed an act of hostility against which they would be able to protect themselves, but an insult which ought to be revenged.

Frederic William had a great mind to cause some garrisons in the territory of Lüneburg to be seized, in order that he too might have prisoners to exchange; and, on the whole, it would have suited him to seek redress by arms. And indeed both parties at once placed themselves in readiness for war. George II called upon his friends at Wolfenbüttel, Cassel, and Copenhagen; he even applied to the French. At Berlin nothing was heard and seen any more but warlike preparations. Already the innate military spirit of the crown-prince was roused: he hoped to distinguish himself, and to give the king a better opinion of him.

Yet things were not in such a state as to lead to a bloody conflict. It would have been like a feud of the middle ages, such as even during the epoch of the Reformation sometimes settled questions of general interest. But those times also were passed. The two princes were by far too powerful for an isolated quarrel to be carried on between them.

After many other attempts at mediation,—which did not, however, do much,—Frederic William himself made at length the proposition, that the individuals who were claimed as subjects by Hanover should be examined, and that those in whose case the convention existing between the two countries had been violated,

should be given up.* Some hundreds had been talked of, but at last only twenty were found. In return for their being yielded up, the detained Prussian soldiers were likewise set free.

In the meanwhile, the great affairs took a somewhat different turn. At Seville, in November 1729, the English succeeded, with the co-operation of France, in detaching Spain from the empire, and gaining her over to their side. The reason for this was, that the queen, Elizabeth Farnese, began to doubt the fulfilment of those promises of marriage, with the hope of which she had flattered herself for the last four years; and she preferred to secure the future fortunes of her son by a new agreement with England and France. The latter promised her the occupation by Spanish garrisons of all the strongholds in Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia, countries of which the reversion had been already assigned to the prince; and in return she pledged herself to put a stop to the still continuing molestations of the South American trade.

The treaty of Seville is principally the work of Sir Robert Walpole and his brother, who were driven

* Seckendorf says, that he had given the advice, July 28, "On veut avoir satisfaction, coûte qui coûte; j'ai fait différer la réponse," [in which it is said, that it was considered as a violation of the peace, if all were not restored into the *statum quo*,] "jusqu'après la revue des troupes de Hesse, afin que ceux-là retournent dans leur quartier: j'ai proposé pour expédient, que les Hanovriens doivent relâcher tous les Prussiens, et que le roi en même tems relâchera, those who have been taken away by force."

into it by the clamour of the nation, and especially of the merchants. Yet everything was not done by the mere concluding of the treaty. What if the emperor opposed the occupation by the garrisons!

To make him incapable of doing this, it was thought an excellent plan to alienate also Prussia from him. He would then, either have been at once obliged to accept the conditions to be proposed to him,* or they would have nothing more to fear from him or his allies in the north of Germany.

Scarcely had the excitement passed away, which had arisen from the differences about recruiting matters, and had given occasion to so much noise and alarm, when the old matrimonial projects were resumed in England. They were now no more an affair of the court alone. We hear that the nation had hailed the idea with general applause. The ministry besides had just now confirmed itself anew in the whig principles from which it had seemed now and then to swerve. Some of the leading members of the faction, as the Duke of Newcastle, got in. Party-questions were decided in parliament by great majorities in favour of the zealous whigs. At that time, the tories were for Austria, and the whigs for Prussia. How often did the heads of the latter complain that government ne-

* Sir Robert Walpole, 1730: "To distress the emperor . . . is the only way of bringing him to reason." "They fancy," writes the Prussian ambassador, as early as January 1729, "that if they could entirely detach your royal majesty from the emperor, they would win their game, and the emperor would give in, and Spain offer a more reasonable bargain."

glected the power which had just now risen to double its former strength, and which would readily attach itself to England, if it were only treated with due regard. And in this they were not quite wrong, as may be seen from the assenting remarks which Frederic William wrote on the margin of the reports of these speeches. The English ministers determined therefore to send to Berlin an extraordinary ambassador, Sir Charles Hotham, whose youth, appearance, and descent, seemed particularly to fit him for a commission of this kind. They aimed at a lasting family connexion, and consequently at the double marriage.

And was it not of the greatest importance for Prussia also to enter into a more close alliance with those powerful neighbours, at once with the court, the ministry, and the nation? We know that the most anxious wishes of the queen of Prussia, of the crown-prince, and of the princess, were bent upon it. Nor had the Prussian ministers any objection. After having once more considered the matter, Knyphausen and Borck declared, with a certain solemnity of manner, that, as sworn servants of the crown, they could not come to any other opinion but that "the double marriage was in every way desirable."

And thus king Frederic William II had once more to decide this question,—the most difficult, thorny, and perhaps most momentous, which had ever been brought before him; as indeed it affected all his public, domestic, and personal relations.

He was not blind to the advantages of the alliance,

and he would have wished for his daughter whom he loved the good fortune of coming into the "magnificent country," and of shining one day as queen of Great Britain.

But, on the other hand, he was more closely united with the emperor than was known or supposed: and he was far-sighted enough to discern, that although no political alliance was talked of for the present, yet there was one intended for the future.

And above all, he did not think the proposed marriage an advantageous one for his son. There was no need, he said to his ministers, to be in a hurry with him. He, the king himself, was not yet old enough to die. He still saw two other well-grown shoots from his stock. The crown-prince might wait till he was thirty before he married. But, besides, why should an English princess, above all others, be chosen for him? The king was afraid, lest, brought up in the luxury of a brilliant court, she might not feel quite at home amid the simplicity of the Prussian household. Her mind would be bent upon expensive pleasures; she would wish to live in a dashing style, and disturb the frugality of their usual way of living. Her extravagance might even give occasion for a reduction of the army; and then his affairs could not possibly thrive, his house and state would go down hill.*

* One of the most explicit papers extant in his hand-writing. At the conclusion,—“What is alliance? (by marriage.) Is one then more attached to each other? Yes, among private persons, but great lords are guided by their interests. However, I wish to

When he had considered, he did not hesitate. He wished for the marriage of his daughter, but not for that of his son. But the fact that in England the latter was laid down as the condition of the former, was not, after all, without its influence upon him, and it made him, however strongly he sometimes expressed himself against it, waver in his heart. Thence it also happened, that two opposite tendencies, which had gained ground among those about him, on either side broke forth with redoubled vehemence.

One of the most remarkable documents concerning the state of the Prussian court will always be the Memoirs of the princess Frederica Wilhelmina, however much exaggerated and incorrect matter they may contain. It is evident from them, that neither herself nor the queen had any idea of the reasons which made the king hesitate to decide at once in the affirmative. They looked upon him as a headstrong violent father of a family, who is severe only to those who belong to him, but weak to strangers. Their minds were mutually embittered and disgusted. The crown-prince also, who was still at an age when a young man may be influenced by an intelligent elder sister, was infected by this feeling. In order to advance her marriage, he allowed himself to be wheedled into a secret and formal promise, that he would not give his hand to any other but an English princess.

my kinsman, from my heart, every sort of happiness and blessing, if it be not *à mes dépenses*, and to the prejudice of the establishment; for that is a thorn in the side of the English-Hanoverian gentlemen. My establishment, *c'est la pierre de touche*."

But it is also quite incredible to what lengths the other party went, that they might keep the king on their side. Seckendorf had entirely gained over the daily and most intimate companion of the king, general Grumbkow; and the two maintained with Reichenbach, the Prussian resident in London, a connexion in which there is something exceedingly objectionable. This Reichenbach,—who once boasts of his being without ambition, but who was also without any sense of honour,—not only kept up a direct correspondence with Seckendorf, in which he informed him of everything that was done in England with regard to the marriage, and told him that he could as well trust in him as in himself; but, what is still worse, he received instructions from Grumbkow,* how he was to write to the king, and then he composed his dispatches according to his directions. It is hardly conceivable that these letters should not have been destroyed, yet they have been found among the papers of Grumbkow after his death. Reichenbach, who played a subordinate part, but who considered himself as the third in this league, gave directions as to what in support of his dispatches was to be personally suggested to the king. It was their system to represent to him, that England merely intended to treat Prussia as a province, and was going

* In a letter, dated March 17, 1730, Reichenbach reports, "qu'il a envoyé hier par un courrier de 57 (Kinsky) à Bruxelles, et de là par l'ordinaire à Berlin, une telle lettre, à 120 (le roi de Prusse) conformément aux ordres de Grumbkow, et de Seckendorf et il a employé tout ce qu'il a trouvé dans la dernière let

to surround him with such a clique, that he could not move a hand:—representations to which Frederic William was also otherwise most keenly alive.

He wished to avoid having an English daughter-in-law, because he was also afraid that he should then cease to be master in his own house. He thought that she might perhaps aspire to greater importance than he himself possessed, and that he should be killed by vexation, as it were by a slow fire.

If we compare these busy intrigues about the king on both sides, there is this difference between them,—that the one carried on in his own country was justifiable as to its object, which was no other than the completion of the marriage. The king at last suspected that this was aimed at, and interposed with deeds of violence which struck terror into his house and capital, and re-echoed throughout Europe. The other, however, was by far more serious. It had the definite purpose of thoroughly fettering the king to the political system which he had once adopted, and of keeping him detached from England. Of the latter conspiracy, the king had not the slightest suspicion. Whatever Reichenbach wrote, or Grumbkow told him, he believed without the slightest mistrust.

Thus, matters were not exactly in a favourable state, when in England it was resolved to enter into a formal negotiation. The English court knew well how matters stood; but at the same time it meant to break up the whole of the cabal which surrounded the king.

On the second of April, Sir Charles Hotham arrived at Berlin, and on the fourth he had his audience with the king at Charlottenburg.

He at first dwelt on general matters only. He began with a letter of the queen, received the December before, concerning which he had come himself to hear the king's own opinion. The latter protested, that in it mention had only been made of a marriage between the prince of Wales and his daughter (the copy of it seems to have been lost). He was highly pleased with the communication of the ambassador, and entered upon it with the satisfaction of a father, who hopes to give to a beloved child the greatest happiness which is believed to be attained on earth. He requested Hotham to keep the matter secret; he would better have liked the report to be spread that the negotiation had been broken off, and then he would have gone to town, and surprised his daughter with the news, "for which she hoped as for the Messiah." He imagined how he should unexpectedly, in the presence of the ambassador, ask her consent.* Yet the views of the English court and ministry were by no means so simple, and so agreeable to the wishes of the king. Hotham observed, that his commission, first of

* "He would be so good as to be silent about it, until I had come to town. If he then had orders, I should in his presence ask my daughter for her consent, and as to the marriage, and her transport to England, and in what manner . . . they (the ministers) were to arrange with him." He fixed the dowry of the princess at 40,000 dollars, that being the sum which his own wife had brought him.

all, enjoined him to send the answer of the king of Prussia by a state messenger to England. Hereupon an official answer was given him in favour of the single marriage, in which the betrothal of the princess only was mentioned, and this he sent off.

Yet he added to it some other intelligence of greater import. As to political affairs, the king had himself alluded to them, and intimated that proposals must be made to him about them from England. Concerning the crown-prince, Hotham mentioned a report which had come to his knowledge. The king was said to have told one of his secretaries that he was tired of quarrelling with his son, and that he would consent to his marriage, if George II would make him vicegerent of Hanover.* Indeed the king had once expressed himself to this effect; but that he had repeated it then is contradicted by his incidental correspondence on the same day. Yet, however that might have been, Hotham had heard it, and reported it home as a fact which he considered to be true.

As he represented it, the beginning did not seem at all unfavourable. In England it was considered possible, and the messenger was therefore sent back with new and more detailed instructions. After his arrival,

* According to Hotham's report (Raumer's Europa, 1763 to 1783, i, 503), the king told this, April 5, to the secretary of the cabinet. But there is extant an autograph resolution to the minister, of the same date, which the latter must have known. "Of the double marriage, I won't hear a word, and there is nothing said of it in my wife's letter."

on the 4th of May, Hotham had a second audience, which was a great deal more remarkable than the first.

In the course of the conversation, he ventured to make an attack upon the faction, by which, according to the opinion prevailing at the two courts, Frederic William was ruled. He complained of Reichenbach, who had shewn want of respect to the king of Great Britain, and that in letters, the originals of which might be produced. Frederic William thought for an instant of inquiring about the manner in which those letters had been obtained; yet a sort of momentary soft-heartedness this time got the better of him, and he passed over the matter. He said that if Reichenbach was not acceptable in England, he was useless, and consented to recal him.

The main point, however, was the offer of marriage. Hotham began with formally asking, in the name of his king and master, the eldest Prussian princess for the prince of Wales. Frederic William replied, that it was meet and agreeable to him. Yet this was only one side of the English proposal. Hotham went on to say that the king of Great Britain was desirous of uniting himself yet more closely with the Prussian court; that with the unanimous applause of the whole nation, which considered such a step to be even necessary, he had fixed upon one of his princesses for the Prussian crown-prince; and that he wished to make him some proposals concerning this point.

And these proposals, which he immediately pro-

ceeded to communicate, seemed to contain all that the Prussians could have desired.

George II offered to appoint the princess whom the crown-prince of Prussia should marry, as regent of his electoral Brunswick Lüneburg hereditary countries. Her husband, the crown-prince, would then reside with her at Hanover, and be waited upon and maintained in the same style as the king himself when he was present, and that at the expense of his father-in-law.

The offer looked more generous than it really was. It was stipulated that the crown-prince should, after his accession, repay the expenses of his household, and pledge himself besides to go over to England whenever he should be called. This, however, was not mentioned for the present; and it cannot be denied but that the whole of the communication bespoke an anxious wish for a friendly connexion, and implied an increase of the Prussian influence. It was seen in the countenance of the king that it surprised him, and gave him a certain degree of pleasure.

Yet he possessed this time sufficient reserve not to enter upon it at once. He said that, as in the letter of his queen the marriage of the crown-prince had not been mentioned, and this therefore was a new proposal, it might be easily understood that he must first consult about it with his ministers.*

* Letter of the king (dated May 9) to the ministers, in which he apprised them of what took place at the audience, of which Hotham had not wished to give them explicit information.

When he thus more particularly considered the matter, various doubts occurred to his mind.

It did not seem to him honourable, that England wanted to undertake the maintenance of the crown-prince, as if he was too stingy to do it himself. He was afraid, lest by a residence at Hanover the mind of the latter should be alienated from his own country, and he himself get anything but an obedient daughter-in-law. He could not divest himself of the idea that the crown-prince was still too young; but the main difficulty in his eyes was the state of political affairs. The confederates of Seville, of whom England was the directing power, caused a new fermentation throughout the whole of Europe by the differences with Austria. How would it be, if a war actually broke out between the two parties? Would not Prussia then be placed in a most perplexing dilemma? The king, to whom affairs appeared always with their extreme consequences, thought even of the possibility that he might be obliged to take up arms against his son, who would then be vicegerent of Hanover. He at least stipulated for the promise that England would not attack the emperor in the empire. Yet in order to derive a lasting advantage from these passing circumstances, he again brought forward the succession of Berg, and demanded the renewal of its guarantee by the king of England.*

* He speaks of it as a *sine quâ non*, that his majesty of Great Britain, and the crown of England, for the "*faveur*" of this marriage will for ever pledge themselves to guarantee to the royal house of Prussia the future succession of Juliers and Berg.

In this spirit, an official answer was drawn up on the eleventh of May. It is stated in it, that to the former of these marriages there was no objection, but to the second the king could not give his consent, unless the differences with the emperor were settled, and Berg guaranteed to himself. Yet, even in this case, he reserved to himself the right of fixing the time of the marriage. He sent besides the verbal message, that the crown-prince must first distinguish himself, and acquire the qualities necessary for the management of a household. He must complete his twenty-eighth year before he married.

It was about this time that the Prussian court went to a great military festival,—a summer camp which the king of Poland had pitched near Mühlberg. Here it was known that the answer given to the English court was deemed too wide of the mark. It would not enter upon conditions which had so little to do with the marriages. The king answered, that in that case the affair was at an end; yet it ought not to be said that he had declined the honour of such an alliance. It was not declining it, if one found it premature.

This was the view which was taken in England also of the matter in spite of all objections, and the conclusion of the marriages was still reckoned upon. We have, among other letters, one of the queen of England to the queen of Prussia, June 16, which quite breathes the feelings appropriate to the impending new relationship, without the least tinge of resentment, and full of affectionate remembrance of their youthful days.

What without doubt contributed to it, was also the conduct of the crown-prince. Although bound to the greatest secrecy, Hotham had found means to enter into connexion with him,—a passing word at a hunting party, perhaps, was sufficient to keep it up. Frederic, however, had spoken out most explicitly. He had conveyed to his uncle his most urgent entreaties not to reject his father's proposals, whatever might be their nature,—not even, as the case might be, to ask for any securities; only, first of all, to conclude the marriage of his sister, that she might not become quite wretched. It would be enough, if he renewed the promise which he had already given, not to have any other wife but the princess Amelia of England. He would know how to keep his word, if they would only grant him their confidence.*

In England they were not so ready to comply as the prince might have wished. Yet care was taken not to break off the negotiations. Sir Charles Hotham at length declared, that matters of this kind had better be discussed by word of mouth than by letters; that he therefore begged to have some fuller explanations which he would take himself to England. The king gave him those explanations, which chiefly confirmed two points. He promised, on his royal word, that whenever he should resolve upon marrying the crown-prince, he would prefer to any other an English princess, and in fact the one whose age would suit him

* The letter is to be found in Raumer, 513.

best; and, moreover, to have this marriage concluded within ten years at latest.* Hotham expressed the hope, that he would after some time return the bearer of instructions which might empower him to proceed to a settlement of that business. It is not unlikely, that the English court, after that pledge, would have consented even to a single marriage. The new Prussian ambassador, count Degenfeld, at least, heard on his arrival in England, that queen Caroline was very favourable to it.

When the conduct of Frederic William in this affair is to be judged, the violence of his expressions, which now and then broke forth, may meet with much disapprobation; but in the main, he cannot be very much blamed. His objections, whether they were personal, or domestic, or political, were well grounded, and they must not be attributed to the mere influence of men like Grumbkow or Seckendorf. Grumbkow, who had no official position in the department of foreign affairs, was by no means consulted in everything, and it is evident from his written notes that he was sometimes very badly informed. A real difficulty, and which was not to be overcome, but of which only very few had any suspicion, was caused to the king by that secret alliance with Austria, in which he saw the principal security for the future increase of the power of his house.

* "Le roi donne sa parole royale, qu'il préférera toujours le mariage du prince royal son fils avec une princesse d'Angleterre à tout autre."—Declaration of July 9.

Should he form a connexion which was in direct opposition to it? He rather wished to see the peace between Austria and England restored, and then to get the latter to guarantee the succession of Berg. From this reason also, he asked for a delay, and the longest must have been the most acceptable to him. With his manner of thinking, it was much, and indeed more than might have been expected, that he really gave the promise to marry his son with an English princess. And with this, matters ought to have been allowed to rest, and any acceleration, or change of plan, be looked for from the vicissitudes of future chances.

But Hotham, when about to take his leave, did an indiscretion which must have caused fresh confusion.

On the 10th of July, he had his farewell audience, in which he was to present his successor *ad interim*, Guy Dickens. All went off as well as possible, and the king shewed himself in good spirits and in good humour, when Hotham pulled out a letter, which he wanted to produce as a sequel to the Reichenbach correspondence, which had been complained of before. It was in Grumbkow's hand-writing, who spoke in it with contempt of the opening of private letters, as was practised by the English court. Grumbkow had written it with the very purpose that it might be opened and read. This letter Hotham handed to the king, hoping to ruin Grumbkow, as he also had effected the recall of Reichenbach. But he must have been inexpert indeed in the art of negotiation. Had

he only reflected a little, he could not but have foreseen that he would produce exactly the contrary effect upon the excitable prince. It was not quite so unusual at the European courts to ask for the recall of an ambassador. Frederic William had at that time overcome a natural repugnance, and yielded. But it affected him in a very different manner, when it was attempted to overthrow by the same odious means the minister of his secret affairs, who was most about his person. Was it not evident now, after all, that they wished to meddle with his own concerns, and to dictate laws to him within his own house,—the most hateful thing which he could imagine on earth. He flung the letter on the ground, turned his back upon the ambassador, and left the room.

It was reported at the time, that the king had raised his foot against Hotham, as if he wanted personally to insult him, and afterwards all but asked his pardon. The one as well as the other is exaggerated.

As the ambassador hinted, that what had happened affected not less his sovereign than himself, the king declared so much the more emphatically, that the sacred person of the majesty of Great Britain had nothing to do with the matter, but the chevalier Charles Hotham alone. Yet he wished not to part in unkindness even from the latter. He caused him to be asked whether he would consider it as a satisfaction, if he were once more invited to the royal table. But Sir Charles set forth quite different pretensions. The king should, in another audience, accept the letter

which he had before flung on the ground, and promise to institute an inquiry about the affair, in which case Hotham indeed would have appeared to be in the right. When this was not granted him, he preferred to leave the court, without having taken farewell. Frederic William, thereby exasperated afresh, sent word to the king of England that this ambassador was not fit, either by his disposition or his conduct, to maintain the good understanding between the two courts.

Hotham was not the man to carry out such a difficult negotiation. Immediately after his appointment, before he had left London, he spoke freely out to Reichenbach, and the latter apprized Grumbkow and Seckendorf that they would have an enemy in him. In Berlin he meddled by far too much with the disagreements by which the king was surrounded, and believed rather in what others told of him, than tried himself to penetrate into his real disposition. Whilst on all occasions he proceeded with a certain proud assurance, he excited the suspicion that he fancied he could one day become at the same time ambassador and first minister in the country, and exercise influence like that of Seckendorf, only for the opposite interest. But how could he have entered the lists against this latter, and Grumbkow, who knew all the shoals of this gulf, in which there were so many sunken rocks?

It is evident that an incident like this must have again given a serious check to the progress of the negotiation; but even now, it was not yet q

This last result was only brought about by an event, quite personal in its nature, though connected with these circumstances; which was not perhaps of any very great moment in itself, as a mere matter of fact, but in reality of the greatest, owing to the persons who played a part in it, and the reaction which it had upon them.

ATTEMPTED ESCAPE OF THE CROWN-PRINCE, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

We have seen already what was the disposition of Frederic, and how the opinion rooted itself in his mind, that he could not live near his father.

As early as the year 1729, he thought of undertaking on his own account the journey for which he could get no leave. From a man at that time well known at Berlin, Vernezobre, who had gained much money in Law's scheme, and who now lived by lending it out on interest, he borrowed a sum which, under the circumstances, was large, and bespoke a travelling-carriage at Leipsic. But he did not then go beyond these preparations, chiefly because the page, Kait, who aided him in it, entered the army about that time, and was transferred to Wesel.*

* *Acta inquisitoria*lia, in puncto desertionis of the crown-prince, lieutenant-colonel of the king's regiment. The valet de chambre, Gummersbach, states, that the king had once asked him, after Kait's removal, whether that was good? and that he had answered, "Would that he had been off before!" Their mutual position therefore excited suspicion already then.

And every other hope was not yet shut out from him.

For some time, things looked still very warlike. A life of active service would of itself have procured him greater liberty; but if there had been really an occasion for feats of arms, and fortune had favoured his courage, quite a different existence would have begun for him.

His father himself had often held out to him the hope of a campaign.

The reconciliation happened instead. When Hotham came to Berlin, he found the crown-prince melancholy and in low spirits, which still increased the interest which even otherwise he would have excited. But he soon rallied, when he was informed of the proposals of the fourth of May, which so directly affected his future existence. What a prospect for him in his depressed condition, full of mortifications, to be raised to an honourable, and almost independent, situation in one of the most considerable electorates! He agreed to all that was asked from him. To be liable to be summoned to England, where his sister would then have lived as princess of Wales, was rather an attraction for him than an objection. But in a short time it was seen, that, if this were ever to come to pass, he would still have before him many a year of self-denial and servitude.

We shall not be mistaken in supposing, that, owing to this reason, his former thoughts recurred with redoubled force, when he promised to cor

English marriage against his father's will,—for that the latter could dispose of his hand, was a thing which he had no notion of,—and pledged himself by his word to carry it out. The secret intention lurked at the bottom (which very clearly peeped out,) of saving himself by flight from the severe constraint under which he lay.

For the latter became more unbearable to him every day. In that camp at Mühlberg, where the eyes of so many strangers were fixed upon him, he was treated like a disobedient boy; once, even, he received personal chastisement, merely that it might be seen that he was considered as nothing better. The enraged king, who never thought of the consequence which his words might have, added insult to injury. He said, that if he himself had been treated in such a manner by his own father, he would have blown his brains out; but that Frederic had no honour, and submitted to everything.

This excited in the prince the thought of immediately running away. He asked the Saxon minister, Count Hoym, whether it were possible for a couple of officers to enter Leipsic without being reported? The count answered, that the governor of that town was attentive and strict. Hoym had an inkling of the prince's intention, and warned him, as he was very closely watched. A letter of recommendation he refused.

The prince considered, that if he escaped from thence, the suspicion of having abetted him might fall upon the king of Poland, and he desisted from it.

He might already reckon upon a better opportunity. Frederic William determined upon undertaking a journey to Upper Germany, or, as it was then still termed, into the empire, on which he meant to gain some courts over to the actual policy of the emperor, in opposition to the alliance of England, France, and Spain, and afterwards to go down the Rhine to Cleves. It was projected that the crown-prince should accompany him, and as this journey led into the neighbourhood of the western frontier, an escape to the foreigner might be easily managed.

The place which Kait had held in the confidence of the prince was now occupied by Lieutenant Von Katte, a young man of some education, who had made his studies at the *pædagogium* at Halle, and occupied himself with literature and music. The written remains which are extant of him exhibit a certain loftiness of mind, and a great deal of youthful eloquence. It may be that he flattered himself with the consideration which his intimacy with the crown-prince procured to him in certain quarters. As to the affairs of life, on the whole, he took them very easily. By those who knew him, he was thought to be more bold and inconsiderate than prudent and discreet. With this friend, who had infinite devotion for him, all sorts of plans were devised.

Katte, for instance, was to cause himself to be dispatched with a recruiting commission, and to take his way to Upper Germany. At a roadside inn near Canstadt, he was to await the arrival of the royal car-

riages, and a servant, who was to be known by his red plume, was to give the sign that his master was present. Under some pretext or other, the prince would then alight, and while he was thought to be in the inn, together with his friend and those who accompanied him, mount upon the horses which they had in readiness, and ride off. Katte was to collect so many attendants that, if it were necessary, they might be able to defend themselves against any people whom the king might send in pursuit of them. Thus they would reach the French frontier, which was not far off; and probably, in the next year, the war would break out between France and the emperor, in which they might take a share. If they distinguished themselves, and were talked of, the king would alter his opinion, and ask them to return. The plan was that of a youth who was bent upon adventurous undertakings. Besides his domestic dissensions, the prince was still actuated by the pain of feeling his faculties fettered in the service of peace, and by the wish of seeing the world, and of distinguishing himself.

Sometimes, however, the flight of his fancy turned rather to England. In the camp, Frederic had one day accidentally met the secretary of the English embassy, Guy Dickens, who was just about to depart for London. He asked him to make enquiries at the English court, whether they would receive and protect him, if he came over? It may easily be imagined how anxious the prince now felt to speak with Guy Dickens after his return. An illustration of the sus-

picion under which he lived is afforded by the manner in which he met with him, and which was the only possible one. It was one evening at ten o'clock, under the great gateway of the royal residence.

Katte brought the Englishman to the spot, and then walked to and fro in order to keep watch, and to guard against any interruption. But Guy Dickens' communications were not of the sort which Frederic wished. He told him at once, that they would not have him in England; that George II would not like to incur the suspicion of having beguiled the prince, otherwise a fire might blaze up in all the four corners of Europe. They begged hard rather to drop the whole idea. If he had debts, and wanted money, he had only to name the sum, and they would get it for him.*

The prince seems not to have been at once convinced of the irrevocableness of this answer. He conceived once more the plan of sending his friend Katte to London, in order to manage the affair better, and had already made out for him a sort of credentials. But, on further consideration, he found that Katte was not a fit messenger, and that the scheme was impracticable. And as it now again became doubtful, whether he was to accompany the king, who was wavering about it for a moment, he at length resolved within himself, if this should not happen, to remain quiet at Potsdam. But if it should happen, and the

* Confer *Informatio ex actis*, from König's collections in Preuss, "Life of Frederic the Great," iv, 470—"Youth and Accession of Frederic the Great."

king took him with him on the journey, ~~then he was~~ to fall back upon his former plans, and to withdraw, time and opportunity favouring him.

Young people are fond of making their resolutions depend upon things which are beyond their controul. Katte promised to be then of the party, and to take a share in his project.

At last the king declared that the prince should accompany him. On this the two friends felt themselves bound to proceed.

Katte found means once during the night to come to Potsdam without being reported, in order finally to arrange with the prince. Yet nothing could be settled, as Katte had not yet the assurance on which everything depended, that he should be ordered on a recruiting expedition. Whether this might happen or not, it was agreed that he should not do anything,—in a word, that he was not to leave Berlin before he received further accounts from Frederic. He immediately took charge of the prince's valuables,—a couple of rings and snuff-boxes, several thousand dollars in hard cash, his Polish order set in diamonds, of which great part of the good stones had already been taken out; with these effects he was to follow at a moment's notice. The books for which Duhan had given him the keys were to be conveyed to Hamburg. They might rely upon it, that Kait would then desert from his garrison, and join them. Nothing was fixed but the names which they should assume: not even the time when, nor the place where they should meet.

On the 16th of July, the journey of the king was begun. Frederic William, as his companion Seckendorff says, spoke everywhere in the patriotic strain. He tried to induce the princely members of the associated circles to unite in the declaration issued by the emperor against his antagonists of Seville. To the French whom he met, he plainly shewed how little he liked them.

At the same time, it was precisely with these that his son now fully intended to take refuge.

The preparations which he could make for it without the aid of his confidant were indeed but trifling. That he might not be betrayed at once by his uniform, he had a roquelaure of red cloth made for him, as he thought quite secretly, but everybody knew it. To a relation of Katte, who brought a letter from him, and whom he hoped to gain over, he expressed himself very incautiously, so that he warned all those about him, and lieutenant-colonel Rochow in particular, who was charged with his immediate superintendence; and their watchfulness became so much the stricter.

In one thing only he succeeded. He enlisted on his side a page who accompanied the king. This youth was a brother of lieutenant Von Kait, and when reminded of the example of the latter, he promised his help.

Nevertheless, the scheme might not have been executed, had not at Feuchtwang a scene of domestic

quarrel taken place, in which his father treated him very roughly* for a slight cause.

The prince called to mind what he would have to suffer the next autumn, during the gloomy days, at Wusterhausen, inasmuch as everybody seemed to be against him; and those about his father, according to all appearances, were bent upon exciting the king against his son. As they now reached a country from whence the French frontier was most easily to be gained, he resolved upon venturing it.

He wrote to Katte to send his effects in advance, and to prepare everything, so that at the first news that he himself had gone off, he might mount his horse and overtake him; and he also named a castle of Count Rothenburg in France as the place where he would meet him. To the elder Kait at Wesel he wrote, directing him to betake himself to the Hague, and to make inquiries in all secresy whether they would be afterwards received there. The younger brother aided him in the preparations necessary for his escape.

The opportunity of which they wanted to avail themselves was the following:—

The last place where the king stopped to sleep before reaching Mannheim, was a village called Steinfurt, not far from that town. Everything was ma-

* As Katte states from a letter of the crown-prince (on his trial Aug. 30), on the occasion of his having dropped a knife of the margravine.

naged still in a very primitive style. There were two barns opposite each other in the village, in one of which quarters for the night were prepared for the king, and in the other for the prince.

When going to bed, the king said that he intended to start the next morning, not, as usual, at three o'clock, but only at five, as they were so near Mannheim.

The prince then thought, that it would be an easy thing for him to escape while the others were still sleeping. Kait promised to get horses by that hour, and to accompany him.

The morning approached. Kait really went for the horses, and at the first dawn, the prince rose from his couch, dressed, put his money into his pocket, wrapped himself up in his red travelling coat, and sallied out to wait for them.

In the meanwhile, however, the valet, to whom Rochow had said, that at night only he was to watch the prince, as during the day he himself would answer for him, had reported it to the lieutenant-colonel; and scarcely was Frederic before the door, where he leant against a carriage which stood by, when Rochow also appeared, and in a most unembarrassed manner bade him good morning.

At that moment Kait came up with his horses. Rochow asked him somewhat sharply, whither he was going with those beasts? Kait answered, that they were the horses on which the pages were to ride; and with this Rochow appeared satisfied.

That at this very hour, which was the usual one for starting, the prince had intended to escape, no one yet suspected. Already Seckendorf also came out from the barn where the king was, and whither Frederic had bent his steps. Rochow asked him jocosely and innocently, how he liked the turn-out of the prince in his new cloak ?

By this time all were up. It did not matter that the prince came a little later to Mannheim than the king; the latter went to see the town with him, and the following day they went together to church. Whilst nobody knew yet of the scheme besides the page Kait, the prince requested him once more at Mannheim to procure horses for him.

But Kait was not able to bear all this any longer. He belonged by no means to the real confidential friends of the prince, having only been just now drawn in by the latter. He felt alarmed at heart, and unhappy that he was to deceive the king his master. At last, at Mannheim, in an outburst of loyalty and remorse, he threw himself at his feet, and confessed everything.

Hereupon, in one of the ante-rooms of the electoral palace at Mannheim, the king called the lieutenant-colonel to the window, and told him that Frederic had intended to escape.—The king told it to the attendants of the prince, and not the attendants to the king.—He also added, that this was neither the time nor the place to speak of it, that they must wait until they had entered their own territory at Wesel; moreover,

that Rochow had to answer with his head for the prince's being brought thither, "alive," said the exasperated monarch, "or dead." Rochow answered, that the prince should not get off; that the people might be trusted who were about him.

They first proceeded to Darmstadt. The prince suspected so little that he was betrayed, as even to repeat there his offer to Kait; but soon the treatment which he had to suffer must have convinced him of it, although no one had told it him.

When they came to Bonn, the prince asked for Seckendorf's intercession. Yet however much the count might otherwise enjoy the favour of the king, he was not able to effect anything in this case. The king was not only in high wrath, but he also suspected some secret, and wished by every means to sift a matter which was connected with those differences which were the most odious in the world to him.

In the evening of the twelfth of August, he arrived at Wesel. Late as it was, the king immediately summoned the prince to a solemn inquisition. He exhorted him to give glory to the Lord his God, and to his father, and to confess all the circumstances of the alleged desertion; for he looked upon the offence as a breach of military duty.

The prince made no attempt at a denial. He also named his two confidants, the elder Kait, and Katte, whom he supposed to have betaken themselves to a place of safety.

Kait, whom a warning from the prince had reached,

had indeed some days before left Wesel, and had gone to Holland. The king tried, but in vain, to have him given up : he luckily got safe to England.

Katte, on the other hand, always preparing, without executing anything,—warned as far as we know, although not by the letter of the prince, which did not reach him,—was arrested like Frederic.

At Wesel, where two other examinations took place, the affair was not brought to a conclusion ; and besides this, the king was obliged, as had been settled before, to return to Berlin. The measures of precaution which at the same time he took with regard to the journey home of his son, prove the apprehensions which the vacillatory, and semi-hostile conduct of his neighbours caused him. The precise time of his departure was kept a secret ; the Hessian and Hanoverian territories were avoided ; yet the king deemed it possible that the travelling carriage of the prince might be waylaid, and attempts be made to carry him off.

The horses were changed, not in the villages and towns, but outside of them. The travellers took only cold collations, and these either in their carriages, or in the open fields, far from woods or enclosures. Instructions were given in case of an attack ; under no circumstances was the prince to be allowed to fall into the hands of a hostile ambuscade, or of suspected enemies.

We shall not repeat the unauthenticated reports of the parental violence of the king : arrangements like

those mentioned just before shew best in what excitement he was,—what far-reaching combinations, deeply affecting his own house, seemed possible to him. He was burning with eagerness to discover them.

First of all, Katte was examined three times within four days. He composed an explicit statement of the circumstances, which he called "*species facti*", in which he made only this mistake, that he laid a greater stress upon his own dissuasions than they really deserved. But the king was not content with that. He ordered a special inquisition to be instituted against him, and would not even have been averse to have recourse to torture. Grumbkow, however, remarked to him, that it might bring him into trouble, and so it was not done.

All other persons who had ever had any connexion with the prince were likewise examined,—his valet, his page, Lieutenant-Colonel Rochow, Lieutenants Ingersleben and Spaen, with whom he had had intercourse at Potsdam; his former sub-governor Colonel Kalkstein; that Vernezobre who had first lent him money; the goldsmith who had sold jewels to him, and also bought them from him; also a young woman, Dorothea Ritter, daughter of a schoolmaster lately settled at Potsdam, with whom he had spoken several times before the door of her house, and to whom he had made some little presents. The latter had most severely to suffer for it.

From the statements which occur in the documents, we have composed our account of these events. The

most remarkable thing which may besides be gleaned from them is the conduct of the prince.

He confesses that he had been very wrong, and does not presume to defend himself. Only he will not allow his attempt at flight to be considered as desertion, asserting that his wish to save himself from the displeasure of his father could not be so termed. Nothing, in the meanwhile, escapes him which might have criminated his mother or sister. Concerning his relations with England (which his father was particularly eager to know), but which had not been as positive as he might think, he expressed himself with the utmost reserve.

At an examination, which, on the way to Cüstrin, was held upon him at Mittenwalde, September 8th, he was informed that Katte had not escaped, and it was hinted to him, that it might cost his friend his life. He caused representations to be made to his father, that he should look upon him as the real culprit, and on Katte as the one who had been led astray: he, as the son of the king, had made himself liable to greater punishment. His mind would never be easy again, as he said, if any body should suffer death on his account.

Thus he came to Cüstrin, where he was put under the strictest arrest. He was confined in a room which was secured by strong new locks and bolts. At the door two sentinels were stationed, and another on the staircase. The officer on guard slept in the ante-room, and nobody durst remain longer with him than

four minutes. The king had himself written down the articles, on which a new examination was held there upon him, September 18th, by the judge-advocate General Mylius. Particularly remarkable are the last of these, to which Mylius made some objections on account of the consequences which might arise from them. Yet the king repeated to him the unalterable order to lay them before the court.* The first was, what a man deserved who broke his honour, and plotted for the purpose of desertion? The prince answered, he did not think that he had acted contrary to honour. The second article put the question, whether he deemed himself still worthy of becoming the sovereign of the country? to which the prince replied, that he could not be his own judge. To the third, whether he wished to have his life spared, or not? the prince said, that he submitted to the mercy of the king. It was the hardest hour which he had ever known, when his presence of mind was put to the severest test. At length, Mylius brought out the fourth and last article. As Frederic, by the violation of his honour, had made himself unworthy of the succession, and as he had likewise forfeited his life, would he, in order to save the latter, give up his claim to the crown, so that his renunciation might be confirmed by the empire?

The prince answered calmly and deliberately, that he did not care so much for his life, but that he

* I order you,—it is my strict command, which I myself have dictated to the pen of my secretary,—I order you to execute my command on my responsibility.”

thought that his majesty would not be quite without mercy towards him. After the conclusion of the examination, the apprehension arose in him that his father might keep him confined for life. He asked the commission to hear him once more, which was done on the first of October. They already believed that he would confess something more concerning the share which England had taken in his projects; but he confined himself to the last articles, and declared, that perpetual imprisonment would be intolerable to him, and that he would prefer renunciation or death. If he were to die, he asked to be told of it in time; but if he could obtain the mercy of the king by giving up his claims, he would submit to his will. Let the king do with him whatever he chose, he would still love and honour him.

After the examinations were ended, a court-martial was constituted at Köpenick to sentence the prince. According to the regulations which then applied to the military rank of the prince, it was composed of three major-generals, three colonels, three lieutenant-colonels, three majors, and three captains.* It was presided over by Lieutenant-General Schulenburg, a man who combined a thoroughly military spirit with very decided religious sentiments,—just what the king

* Generals, von Schwerin, count Dönhof, von Linger; colonels, von Derschau, von Sterling, von Wachholz; lieutenant-colonels, von Weiher, von Schenk, von Milagsheim; majors, von Einsiedel, von Lestewitz, von Lüderitz; captains, von Podewils, von Ieetze, von Itzenplitz.

liked. The two judge-advocates, Mylius and Gerbett, were present.

On the 25th of October 1713, the first part of the minutes of the examinations, and on the 26th, the second, were read to the assembled court-martial. Hereupon they took their oath to pronounce sentence on the evidence which had been read to them, according to the best of their knowledge and to their conscience, and in agreement with the royal articles of war, and with existing rights and customs, without any regard to man. On the 27th they gave their verdict, in the order of their several ranks.

As to the crown-prince, they were all unanimous that it did not behove them, as vassals and subjects, to take cognizance of things which had happened within the royal family. The generals even said, that it would be contrary to their duty to make such inquiry into them as was requisite for a well-grounded decision. Some of them remarked, besides, that the prince was sufficiently punished by his confinement ; and others (the lieutenant-colonels) that nothing applicable to the present case was contained in the articles of war. Thus, as we may see, the opinion of the crown-prince that his project did not in the least partake of the character of desertion, got the majority. They all of them laid, besides, particular stress on the fact, that he so completely submitted to the mercy of his father and king.

I do not find that king Frederic William made the

least objection to their finding, or that he ever seriously intended to inflict punishment of death on his son.

It is true, that many apprehended, from his violent temper, and owing, perhaps, to some angry expression or other, that he would go to extremities. The friendly princes did not fail to intercede for the threatened prince.

King Frederic of Sweden reminded Frederic William of the confidence which his people and all Protestants placed in him. King Augustus of Poland besought him not to treat the affair with military severity, but, as a great lord, with generosity. The empress Anne of Russia says, that she was sure that the crown-prince, whose distinguished talents and qualities were mentioned with so much praise, had only been led astray for a moment by indiscreet people. In the same manner, Charles VI expressed himself in his letter in favour of the prince; in which it is also stated, that though the crown-prince was not yet quite convinced of the affection of the emperor towards the royal electoral house of Brandenburg, this intercession * would make him sure of it. The welfare of both of the houses depended upon their lasting intimacy. No one will deny but that so many represen-

* "This instruction springing from sincere and most loving affection." In the Life of Seckendorf, where this letter, together with the answers of the king and crown-prince was first made known (iv, 285). It is stated to have been presented November 1: The answer of the prince was literally prescribed to him. ob 1

tations must have made at least some impression upon the king; nevertheless it cannot be said that they decided him, not even that of the emperor, although the answer, responding to the friendly proffer in the same spirit, seems to hint it. Seckendorf, to whose discretion it was left to judge, as to whether, when, and how far, anything might be done for the crown-prince, presented the letter for which he himself had made the minute on the 31st of October only, when the sentence of the court-martial had been laid before the king and received by him without objection, as far as it concerned the crown-prince.

But with the finding which the court-martial, after some difference of opinion, had come to against Katte, the king did not agree.

Three of the different ranks,—among other reasons, because he had treated with foreign ministers, and meddled with things which had occurred between the king and his son—had condemned him to death, but, at the same time, had recommended him to the royal mercy. The two others, however, took into consideration that his project had not been executed, and condemned him,—for highly guilty he was, indeed, as matters would have never gone even so far had he not helped the prince—to imprisonment in a fortress for life. The president, who had a vote for himself alone, was also of the latter opinion,* and, as in this manner the votes were equal, they agreed according

* *Votum præsidis*, “as the affair had not after all been put into execution, not even time and place being fixed.”

to the precedent followed in such cases, in the milder sentence, which was laid before the king as that of the whole court.

The latter said, that it was a sentence sprung from the fear of man, and bade the court assemble once more on the 31st of October. Yet it persisted in its former decision, each rank in particular, and all together.

Hereupon the king resolved on amending the sentence. For this very reason, said Mylius, the sentences of courts were sent to the sovereign lord and commander, that in his superior discretion and prerogative he might either mitigate,* or, perhaps, also aggravate them. The king himself said, that Katte, although in his quality of officer of the guards, more than others personally bound to him, had yet "plotted with the *rising sun*, and for the purpose of desertion had entered into trickeries with foreign ambassadors; that thereby he had committed the crime of *læsus majestatis*, and made himself liable to death by decapitation; and that if he (the king) spared him, he should not in future be able to trust any one who was bound to him by his oath and duty." Katte appealed once more in a long and detailed letter to the mercy of the king. He accuses himself in it of youthful indiscretion, and of deviation from the path of duty; yet his infatuation, free from secret designs, his heart, actuated by love and pity, called for mercy: a withering

* "Especially when *bonum publicum* should require it."—Mylius, in a statement to be sent to England.

tree was spared still awhile, but he was already putting forth new shoots of faith and loyalty. The king, however, proved inflexible. He sent him word that it was better that he should die, than that justice should depart from the world. It was settled in his mind that Katte should, in the fortress of Cüstrin, before the eyes of the prince, have his head cut off.

This order of his was carried into execution on the 6th of November.

Early in the morning Frederic was apprized of what he was doomed to see. He requested that they should wait, and send a message by a courier to the king, that he (the prince) would submit to death, or to renunciation, or, what was worse than either, to imprisonment for life, if his friend were spared. Who would, however, have ventured to stop the execution, which had been positively ordered, and was already on the point of taking place? At seven o'clock a detachment of the garrison was marched to the rampart, and formed in a circle round the spot where Katte was to be beheaded. Soon afterwards, the culprit was brought up by another detachment of the *gens d'armes* of the guards, to which he belonged. As soon as Katte saw that there was no more mercy for him, he had opened his whole soul to the consolations of religion. The preacher had persuaded him that he was led this painful way for his salvation. He now appeared calm and determined. It is quite true that the place of execution was immediately below the windows of the prince, over the Mühlenpforte (Mill-

gate), near the guard-house.* Katte was already standing in the midst of the circle, and they were just going to read out his sentence, when the prince, who was obliged to appear at the window, called out to him, begging that he would pardon him. Katte answered that he knew of nothing that he had to pardon him for.† He himself took off his cravat, and turned his face towards the prince, fixing his eyes upon him. Thus he wished to die. At this sight Frederic fell into a swoon. When he recovered, all was over. The head and body of the corpse, placed together, were still lying on the ground. He would not leave his window, until, in the afternoon, some citizens made their appearance, who put the dead body into a coffin, and removed it. Even then, until evening, he would not withdraw his eyes from the spot. During the night, he was heard talking to himself, and on the following morning he said that the king had not been able to take Katte from him, as his friend stood incessantly before his eyes.

When the same clergyman who had prepared his friend for death, appeared in his prison and began to

* Report of General Lepel, Nov. 8: "The execution was performed before his (the prince's) eyes, and Katte, after having stripped, turned his face towards him, whereupon the prince fell into a swoon, and the captain was obliged to step up and support him."

† Lepel states the words to have been, "Je vous demande mille pardons!" to which Katte had replied in the following words: "Monseigneur, vous n'avez rien à me demander," which cannot have any other meaning but that which is given in the text.

to speak with him about religion, the thought occurred to his mind, that he too was doomed to follow in the same way, in a week or a fortnight.

It would be difficult to calculate the effect which such an event,—this violent struggle to escape from an oppressive and galling condition, and, after its failure, the redoubled stringency of those stubborn but necessary conventional rules by which society is held together; the sight of his friend falling as their victim, and the fluctuation between life and death,—must have produced upon a mind capable of great enterprise, but as yet not quite formed, and still striving for its developement.

It seems remarkable to me, that in the whole course of the trial not a word of hatred, nor a trace of any political design, is to be detected. How different a case from that of Don Carlos, in Spain, who in his feverish excitement spoke of the murder of his father; or from that of the Russian Alexis, who cherished the design of undoing everything that his father had done; and considering the latter as the oppressor of the country, and himself as its born liberator, did not wish to inherit the empire from him, but to be installed in it by the emperor Charles VI.* In the present case, a political design could at most be attributed to the father, who was determined to put an end for ever to the attempts made from foreign countries to meddle

* Some of his confessions are to be found in Bergmann's "Peter the Great," iv, 240 and 279. Affanassjews, 283.

with the affairs of his house, and with his policy. He was in about the same stage of political advancement as cardinal Richelieu was one hundred years before, who combated with the most vigorous zeal, in the mother and brother of his king, the influence which Spain attempted to gain over the supreme power in France. However, we see here only a father who wants to have a son and successor according to his own mind,—and a son whose natural disposition and tendencies rose against it,—who unhesitatingly followed a diverging line of life, and after having fallen into deviations which might have led him farther and farther, now, after a violent conflict, was obliged to return from them.

Whilst the prince was at the height of his apprehensions of being condemned to death, the king sent him word, that, as he had been informed by the preacher of his repentance and contrition, he would make a beginning of pardon, and release him from strict imprisonment. Frederic would scarcely believe it. He only deemed it true, when the original of his father's letter was shewn him.

Yet there were some conditions attached to it. The father would not grant any relaxation, unless the son bound himself anew to him by a fresh oath.

Frederic was to swear, that he would ever be faithful and obedient to his father; that he would never more attempt to withdraw himself from his royal and parental authority; and that, if he should not henceforward live in every respect agreeably to the will and

pleasure of his father, he should forfeit for ever the royal and electoral succession.*

He swore to this in the presence of generals Grumbkow and Glasenapp, and of some higher civil officers, who had come for the purpose to Cüstrin, and also of those who had now been attached to him as people of particular trustworthiness.

These were the grooms of the chamber, Natzmer and Rohwedel, and a royal councillor, Wolden, who was charged with the chief superintendence. They also were to take an oath, at which they trembled, that they would acknowledge only one God, and one king, Frederic William, as their master. In their company exclusively, the prince, who was confined within the precincts of Cüstrin, was to pass through a strict school.

It had ever been the idea of the king to make him work in the administration; as it was his opinion, that a prince, who did not understand anything of civil government and political economy, was liable to fall into the hands of favourites, and to be despised.

On the day after he had taken the oath, the prince was introduced into the military and demesniai chamber of Cüstrin. He took his place as "auscultator," together with one of those two grooms, at a table,

* The king to the preacher, Nov. 8. The king had rejected the first form as insufficient. He expressly reminded the crown-prince that mental reservations were not known in this country; whereupon the latter says, that an oath must be sworn in that meaning which he had held who had prescribed it; but he wished to see it beforehand.

placed at the lower end.* Here he was to work every day, from seven to half-past eleven, and from three to five o'clock. We find the minutes of the sessions signed by him likewise at the bottom, below the names of the councillors. In after hours, the president Münchow, or director Hille, were to instruct him in financial matters, which he was not yet supposed to understand. He was not to write any letters, not even to his brothers and sisters, and only at certain periods to the king and the queen. He was neither to practise, nor even to hear music, and to see strangers as little as possible. No one was ever to speak to him of politics; the only subjects of conversation were to be the Word of God, and the laws and the administration of the country. Of all the books in the world, three alone were allowed him: the German Bible, the hymn-book, and Arndt's "True Christianity". If, it was said, he had time left, the old papers of the Margrave Hans of Cüstrin, the brother of Joachim II, one of the first German princes who displayed a true talent for political economy, might be supplied to him from the archives, and these he might study.

The king rejected the proposal made to him by Münchow and Hille, that they might be allowed at least to communicate to the prince some books about

* The first protocol of a session in his presence is of the date of November 20. There was discussed in it a complaint of the duke of Merseburg concerning the prohibition of Saxon goods, especially of broad-cloth, at Frankfort on the Oder.

financial and police matters. He said (how very different from his son!) that nothing was to be learned from books, and that the prince had been spoilt by useless reading. We find that the documents of that old Margrave were asked for also in Berlin.

It was with the hope of propitiating the king, that soon after the beginning of the prince's attendance, an essay on the improvement of spun manufactures in Prussia, which Frederic is said to have written, was sent to him. The king would not even believe that it was from the pen of his son, and said, that in general, he ought not to occupy himself with plans of improvement, but rather learn how to make estimates of fields and estates, and turn his attention to cattle breeding; for he must know how much trouble it costs a peasant to gather as many groats as would make a dollar, in order that he might one day deal carefully with them. In May, Frederic really completed the estimate of an "arende," according to a given number of acres, which was sent in to the king. Hille says, that neither himself, nor the president, could have drawn up a better one, and that the prince had made excellent progress.

Another affair, besides, became the subject of discussion during the first months at Cüstrin,—one of a most delicate nature,—namely, the difference in religious opinion, already spoken of. The king's blood was roused, when he thought that his son held fast by the Calvinist doctrine of predestination; according to which, as he himself understood it, some could not do

to give in. Of Frederic himself we only know, that he says that he would not become a martyr for his opinions.

The king was highly pleased when he heard of this concession. He now expressed himself somewhat more graciously, and sent some servants, that he might completely shew the prince under what an error he had been labouring.

But, it might be asked, was not this exactly the way to disgust him with both opinions. Whilst the one appeared to him as inconsistent, and the other would lead to conclusions which were contrary to other inviolable principles, they must both become indifferent to an inquiring mind.

Sometimes Frederic bitterly felt the subjection under which he was kept. One day it would occur to him, whether he ought not, even in his prison, once more to put himself in opposition to his father, and perish with honour. But he was persuaded, that to bear adversity well likewise gave honour.

In this he was doubtless confirmed by anonymous letters which were sometimes sent to him. They were written in a disguised hand, very likely by his elder sister, and they testify a glowing admiration of his behaviour.*

It is said in them, that he shewed so much self-denial

* It is said of him,—

“Celui-ci est parfait dans toutes ses actions;
Maître de ses passions, il sait les commander.
Son grand cœur est soumis aux loix de la raison;
Il ne fait jamais rien qui ne soit de saison.”

the result of premeditation. He confessed several things, which he had until now always kept secret, and the two seemed for ever reconciled. He must be blind, says Hille, who could not see in it the hand of Providence.

The prince then got permission, sometimes to leave Cüstrin, and sometimes to visit the nearest demesnes. He was now reduced to such a state that he felt a happiness in being able to breathe free air again. It gave him greater pleasure to ride through the fields than to follow the chase, although the latter also was done, and a detailed report of it sent in to the king, who was glad to hear the news.

He chiefly went over the demesne lands of Quart-schen Carzig and Wollup. It made a considerable impression on him, when he heard that the latter had formerly brought in 1,600 dollars only, and that its revenue had been raised by the management of his father to 20,000 dollars. He inspected buildings, live stock, fields, the whole of the estates, and found that they were capable of further improvements, especially if the marshes, which were of no use to anybody, were drained.

Such a complete change of sentiments as the father had in view was not, however, effected in the prince. His mind was too energetic, and of too original a cast, ever to yield submission to any other. But the school which he had to go through at Cüstrin, the intercourse with men, who indeed shewed him forbearance and regard, but also told him the truth, broke the one-

sided tendencies hitherto followed by him. It was soon remarked, that he had a taste, not for pleasure, and the intellectual pursuits of *belles lettres* only, but also for serious things and for work. He devoted himself to financial studies with a zeal for which no one would have given him credit, and after having got over the first difficulties of them, he began to combine the ideas which occurred to him in his own manner, and to shew an interest in the administration, which could only spring from a thorough knowledge of the subject. For military affairs also he shewed an inclination which was now voluntary. He expressed a wish to have one company at Cüstrin and another at Frankfort, that he might be able at the same time to attend to the service, and to continue his agricultural pursuits in that neighbourhood.

The king would not yet believe it, as it surpassed his expectations; and for all that it was very sincerely meant.

Among the minutes which without doubt are of Frederic's composition, there are two very remarkable papers. The one, on the necessity of raising the Prussian commerce by lowering the inland customs, and of making use of the advantages afforded by the possession of the mouths of the Oder, and of such a great extent of coast on the Baltic; the other, of a political nature. In the latter, the geographical instability of the Prussian monarchy is discussed. The prince thought that in the East the possession of West Prussia, and of Pomerania, which, at that time, s

belonged to Sweden, was indispensable. In the West, Cleves could only be protected when they possessed Juliers and Berg. As far as we know, the king never saw this composition; but Seckendorf succeeded in procuring it, and sent it to prince Eugene. The latter shews in his answer the utmost astonishment at the far-reaching ideas of this young prince, who was indeed still perhaps flighty and indiscreet, but vigorous and sensible, so that he might some time or other become dangerous to his neighbours. He already gave every one who saw him the impression of a superior character. Field-marshal Schulenburg was quite struck with the manner in which, almost like a king, he received the officers of his regiment whom he presented to him. He said that the prince felt who he was: he would one day shew it to the world.

But yet the ties were not all formed which were to influence his personal destinies. Whilst Frederic roused himself to ideas which, quite different from those high-flying projects to which he had formerly given himself up, appeared both practical and bold, his father, to cut off the possibility of any future aberration, now thought of marrying him without delay.

In the midst of all the misunderstandings, even after the Hotham affair, the court of St. James had not renounced the hope of a family alliance. It was even inclined to connect with it an approach towards Austria, as Frederic William had at last demanded. Even in September 1730, Harrington made a communication in this spirit. Just at that time, howe

resulted from the inquiries concerning the attempt at escape of the crown-prince, that the English plenipotentiaries, although they might not have gone so far as was supposed, had at least undoubtedly become the medium of his dealings with their court, had conveyed his questions to London, and communicated to him the answers, which were not, however, always of the nature which he would have wished.* In the height of his anger about it, Frederic William caused the English envoy, Guy Dickens, to be apprized with official distinctness, that there could be no question about any marriage between the children of the two houses, neither of a double one, consequently that of the crown-prince, nor even of a single one, that of his own princess with the prince of Wales. He would, as he says in one of his marginal notes, see no English princess in his house, and as little give one of his own to the English, so as to be bound by any condition, however advantageous it might be. With this only, those negotiations were broken off for ever. In the spring, 1731, the princess Wilhelmina was betrothed to the hereditary prince of Baireuth, and the king sought for his crown-prince a wife from another house.

In those days already, and from time to time after-

* The king to Chambrier, Sept. 16: "Vous ne devez pas dissimuler que la cour d'Angleterre n'avait pas ignoré que le prince méditait son évasion, que le chevalier Hotham avait été consulté par le prince sur l'exécution de ses projets," &c., and to Keppel, that he ought to have informed him, "s'il en avait voulu agir en
vec moi."

as never to do any thing but what was seasonable; and that he was perfect in every thing, knowing how to submit his great heart to the laws of reason.

It would have been in itself an impossible task accurately to execute the will of the king.

The king might order that his son was never to see a Frenchman, nor to read a French book, nor a French newspaper,—he was allowed no journal but those published at Berlin and at Hamburg, and the advertising ones,—but this had perhaps only the effect of exciting in him so much the stronger predilection for everything French. He would not desist from making verses in that language, even when told that it was not right. There are some still extant, in which he consoles himself for his adversities, not without traces of a spirit to which this mode of expression was once to become for ever a second nature.*

People remarked with astonishment, how utterly he was ruled by it. Hille says that an epigrammatical turn gave the prince more pleasure than plain sober sense. Nothing was to be done with him by wise precepts. It was necessary to shew him the ridiculous side of things. Frederic himself would parody his situation by jocose orders, which are couched in all the formal jargon of the conventional style of office.

* Hille to Grumbkow, Dec. 18, 1730. "Dites ou écrivez lui tout ce que vous voulez: si cela n'est pas assaisonné de quelques traits d'esprit, il s'en moque. S'il y en a, il admire; il pèse avec exactitude, s'il y en a trop, ou trop peu du sel Attique; mais pour ce qui est du réel, il ne se met pas guère en peine."

Those about him, who looked upon him always as the prince their future sovereign, indulged him in every thing which could in any way be reconciled with the strictest instructions given to them.

Grumbkow also relented. As the prince and his companions had several times blundered in their correspondence, he at last pointed out what they ought to write from Cüstrin to the king, in order to propitiate him; and, at the same time, what they ought to say to himself, in letters which were meant to be seen.

Hereupon, a year of expiation having also now expired, the king determined to see his son again. The meeting took place at the government-house of Cüstrin, August 15, 1731. I will not describe it, as it is already known,* and something of it on the side of the prince was premeditated. But when the king represented to him with fatherly warmth what the consequence must have been, had his plans succeeded, and especially, how wretched the queen must have been made by it; when he, moreover, asked him, why he shewed hostility to a father who was only working for him, and could not win his friendship by it, Frederic felt overcome. If we may so express ourselves, the brazen bonds which encircled his heart now burst. He felt that the king really loved him; so he threw himself at his feet with a devotion, and exhibited towards him a filial feeling which never could have been

* Report of Grumbkow to Seckendorf, in Förster, iii, 50.

be solved : what position the Prussian state would, in such a case, take, with regard to the Russian empire? for a union of the two would have roused the whole of Europe. The crown-prince, who was once asked, whether, if the affair were accomplished, he would feel inclined to renounce the Prussian crown, answered, that he would not commit such a folly. If he did so, it would be thought, that he would not keep his word, but that after his father's death, he would appear at the head of a Russian army, on the frontier, and reclaim the inheritance of his ancestors.

This powerful capacity growing up with the vigour of intellectual superiority, was not at all fated to profit one or the other of the neighbouring empires; Frederic William was very much in the right, when he sought for him a princess who would neither be able to exercise any great influence on his court, or to draw him into foreign concerns. Prussia was, above all, to remain Prussian.

His choice fell on the princess Elizabeth Christina, of Brunswick-Bevern.

The wife of the emperor, Charles VI, sprang from that house, being the aunt of the princess; and there is no doubt, but that the policy of Austria (it was its deepest secret, which not a soul besides Grumbkow was to know) tried, by means of its adroit representative, to direct the views of the king that way. They believed, that it was thus only that the English projects could be definitely put an end to, and the crown-prince be for ever bound to the house of Austria. It

was supposed, that the prince would be only very scantily provided for by his father, and every readiness was shewn, in that case, to supply him with money.

It was probably very gratifying to the king, that the princess was related to the imperial house, but what he most dwelt upon was this, that, although not very beautiful, she was modest and pious—in short, a daughter-in-law with whom he and his queen would be able to live. In the beginning of February 1732, he offered her to the prince, promised him that he should be allowed to travel as soon as he had heirs, and called upon him to declare himself as speedily as possible.

Grumbkow wrote to the same effect. He purposely described the princess, who, at that time, came with her parents to Berlin, less favorably than she deserved, that Frederic might feel agreeably surprised when he saw her. He hinted even, at the wish of Seckendorf, (for they did not scruple to tell what was not true) that the imperial court had not been pleased at the journey of the family of Bevern, in order that he might not be suspected of meddling with the affairs of the royal family of Prussia, and especially those of the crown-prince, to whom, on the contrary, the fullest liberty in the choice of a wife, ought to be left.

Once more, Frederic's mind was strongly stirred. On one side he saw his father, who meant well at bottom, and whose anger it was terrible to excite. If he submitted, he might reckon upon a far more free and easy life; hopes were given him of a journey, and he

scarcely noticed what conditions were attached to it. At a moment when he felt overcome by these considerations, he wrote to his father, that, even if the description which he gave of the princess were too favourable, he would, nevertheless, in everything submit to his will.

But immediately after, the other side of the question struck his mind.

Was he going to bind himself for ever to a connexion; which, in all likelihood, would become insupportable to him? He was afraid, that he would have to blush for a wife of deficient education, and to feel wearied all the year round in her company. He wished the wife with whom he was to live, to be of a congenial disposition, and beautiful,—rather too free than too virtuous, and he thought, that, least of all, he would be able to bear a saint, who had half a dozen hypocrites in her train. The letter to the king had scarcely been dispatched, when he wrote another to Grumbkow, quite in a contrary spirit. Misfortune for misfortune, says he, all was the same to him. He was punished enough for the fault which he had committed. He would not bind himself to be wretched for ever. He would rather put an end to all his miseries by a pistol shot: God would not condemn him, if he rid himself of a miserable life.*

Grumbkow, to whom the king, elated with joy, had

* “Je crois que le bon Dieu ne damnerait pas pour cela, et, ayant pitié de moi, en échange d’une vie misérable m’accordera le salut.”

shewn the first letter, received on the next morning the second, which was directed to himself. It must be allowed, that he had now very good reason to oppose the plans. He represented to him that he despaired too soon, and without any knowledge of the facts. What would he do, when God one day visited him with real calamities? and, indeed, he stated as emphatically as possible, that the prince must not reckon in this affair upon him; he would serve him as far as his duty to the king allowed him, but not a step farther. If the prince intended to act Don Carlos, (of St. Real) he himself would not be the dupe of Grammont.

Whilst Frederic got this abrupt rebuke, the answer also of the king arrived, who expressed his happiness at having such an obedient son, and directed him to give warning at his quarters at Cüstrin to pay every thing, and to come to Berlin "with bag and baggage." In his usual manner, he appointed the time of his arrival with the greatest exactness for Tuesday, the 26th of February, at six o'clock in the evening. It was Shrove Tuesday. Could Frederic hesitate to leave the place of imprisonment and exile? He came at the appointed hour.

When he appeared at court, the people missed somewhat of his youthful elegance,—of that rash, affectionate openness in giving himself up to persons and things, which had formerly been liked in him.* He

* Already in November 1731, he had been allowed to be present

had become taller and stronger, more self-possessed and staid,—in a word, more manly.

To oppose the king, however, he must not venture, not even in this affair, which most nearly concerned him. On the 28th, already, Frederic William, who did not know what delay was, proceeded to bring the marriage to a conclusion. After having asked the duke and duchess of Bevern, in person, for their consent, Frederic was sent for. As he declared that he felt no aversion to the princess, the latter also was summoned, who then, as a good child, answered, that she would do everything which her father and mother might bid her, and that the person of the prince by no means displeased her. The king insisted that Frederic should at once kiss the hands of his future parents-in-law, as a token of his filial respect.

Just at that time, duke Francis of Lorraine, also had come to Berlin, and was received there in the most flattering manner. The king made the tall grenadiers at Potsdam perform their exercise before him ; all the guns at Berlin were fired on his arrival ; battalions, the parade of which he visited, had to cheer him ; and other such like things were done.* In his presence, the solemn betrothal of the crown-prince took place on the 10th of March. The two young gentlemen seemed to become very good friends.

The day after, the king introduced the crown-prince

at the wedding of his sister. She was astonished at the change which had been wrought in him.

* Newspaper article in Fassmann's Frederic William I, 429.

into the office of the supreme board of administration, at first, with the understanding that he should not have anything to decide, but only have to instruct himself. If he had any doubts, he was not to contradict, but to look into the old resolutions of the king. He promoted him, as it were, like one of his councilors, from the lower station to the higher one. In the army the prince was also reinstated as an officer, and appointed as colonel-in-chief of the infantry regiment garrisoned in Ruppín, which had until now been known as that of Golz. He had his liberty again; but one sees at what price, and with what obligation to the strictest obedience.

The king expressed much satisfaction at the course which things had taken. He said that people had wanted to dictate laws to him in his family, and even to prescribe to whom he should marry his children, and to whom he should not;—that afterwards he had indeed allowed the Russian marriage to be talked of, whereat the whole world had been incensed, but that he himself had never thought of it; and that at last he had put a stop to all that gossip, and shewn the world that he was master in his own house, just as well as anybody else in theirs.

While the king looked upon this affair as a thoroughly personal one, which concerned him as an individual, and the father of his family, we nevertheless know that the ambition of the proudest political independence was for him involved in it, and we may add besides another remark.

It is not at every stage of political existence, that to a people and a state the close alliance with another is wholesome; and it is questionable whether at that epoch Prussia would have advanced her own development by entering into such an intimate connexion with England as the projected one.

England was too powerful not to bear down and carry along with her, by her natural preponderance, in a lasting league, her weaker ally; and moreover, if English civilization, which just at that time displayed itself in great and splendid works, got as it were a privileged influence at Berlin,—a city which already contained so many foreign elements,—it must appear doubtful whether the native German genius would not have found it too difficult independently to force its way. At least, everything would have taken a different form. The crown-prince, as vicegerent of Hanover, drawn into a connexion with the English court, in which he would have had at all events to act a subordinate part, would have been obliged afterwards forcibly to tear himself away from it, or he would never have become the Prussian Frederic.

We shall see further on what line he took, in spite of all the limitations which were imposed upon him, to place himself in connexion with general civilization and the intellectual tendencies of the European world. In the interval between the storms which now had been allayed, and the beginning of his reign, considerable leisure was granted him, which he employed for that purpose. Let us now turn our glance once

more upon the political consequences of these combinations.

It is undeniable that they chiefly profited the house of Austria.

The English government felt obliged to think of an immediate return to a good understanding with Austria. If, as it had wished, it had gained over Prussia, the emperor would have been obliged to yield. Had those marriages been concluded, even without any political alliance, Prussia would have taken a position between the two powers, and acted the part of mediator. Now the English court made advances to the imperial one, rather in opposition to that of Prussia. It could not delay such a step, as the peaceful and undisturbed commercial intercourse with Spain and her colonies, for which the English nation longed above everything, was not to be re-established. As long as the Spanish garrisons were not received in the places destined for Don Carlos, the treaty of Seville was unfulfilled. The Spanish government felt very little bound by it, and continually made the English feel its resentment. To obtain, however, the consent of the imperial court, there was, as matters now stood, no other means but to offer it support in the affair which it had most at heart; namely, the settlement of the succession. There were now less difficulties for doing so than formerly, as the Spanish marriages were no more to be thought of, and it appeared even desirable, since at the French court, more and more clearly, very selfish designs with regard to it became evident.

And thus England shewed herself ready for this move, provided that Austria, on her side, would make the necessary concessions, to which she also consented. On the 16th of March 1731, a new treaty of Vienna was concluded, in which England engaged herself to guarantee the Austrian succession, and Austria, on the other hand, agreed to the admission of the garrisons into those places, and, at the same time, definitively gave up the Ostend Company, the establishment of which caused such great commotions.* Prince Eugene felt highly satisfied. It was his opinion that one ought now to receive without farther delay the Spanish troops also, and thereby put the treaty into undeniable force. If Austria, in the establishment of the company and her alliance with Spain, had really had the intention only of inducing the reluctant maritime powers (for Holland joined the English) to acknowledge the succession, its policy would have been very mysterious, adroit, and fortunate; but for its success,—since otherwise things might have turned out very differently—it was requisite that just such a man as Frederic William I, in whom German sympathies were prevailing, and who, in return for a positive concession, contented himself with a distant hope, should be sitting on the throne of Prussia. Now England merely followed the example which he himself had given. And doubtless the gain of Austria

* Document in Du Mont, Supplement, iii, n, 288. “Actus Concurrentiæ Ordinum Generalium ad Tractatum Viennensem.”—*Ibid.* 291.

was immense, when we consider, as we ought, that the affair was doubtful, and the guarantee might also have been refused.

The king of Prussia was such a warm friend of Austria, that he hailed as a lucky one an event which might otherwise have appeared to him critical. Nothing, he said, gave him more pleasure than to see England and Holland coming to kiss the hands of the emperor. Seckendorf, on the other hand, asserted that, notwithstanding the re-establishment of a good understanding with the English court, no concessions would ever be made to the latter which might be injurious to the house of Brandenburg; that if the emperor stood well with England, he would always be on still better and more intimate terms with Prussia; and that he did not doubt but that these were the views of the king also. "As long as I live," the king answered.*

And immediately afterwards, Frederic William once more granted his support in a most important affair. Once sure of England, or rather of Hanover, they determined at Vienna to have the succession guaranteed by the empire. Frederic William had always advised this. When the preparations were completed in the traditionary forms, and the decree was to be put to the vote, the emperor called upon the king to send his

* Feb. 21, 1731.—In this letter, Seckendorf the emperor had expressed a wish to make the personal such a worthy and patriotic prince.

sian court, and that he had left it to him to settle the points, which were still litigated. How should not he always be one of the most powerful men in Germany, who succeeds in maintaining a good understanding between Austria and Prussia? He will extend his influence also upon all the lesser potentates.

It was chiefly Seckendorf's doing, that the king, in order to make the personal acquaintance of the emperor and empress, in the summer of 1732, undertook a journey to Bohemia. On the 31st of July, Frederic William, accompanied by Grumbkow and Seckendorf, arrived at an imperial estate of the name of Kladrup, near the borders of Silesia, where everything had been prepared for him. At the neighbouring Chlumitz the emperor expected him, and from thence they went to Prague.

As is almost always the case when princes personally meet, and nothing is put down in writing, hardly any notice with regard to this interview is to be found in the archives. From the letters of the king,* we learn that considerable impression was made upon him by the fertility of the country, and the magnificence of the capital,—the greatest, however, by the reception which was given him. The empress said that she looked upon the princess of Bevern, who was betrothed to the crown-prince, as her daughter; the prince himself she called her son. The king seems from his own account to have been particularly pleased with prince Eugene, who, as he says, had never spoken

* Especially to Leopold of Dessau.

to him so much from his heart, and who was surely an honest man, and fond of him. Affairs also, especially the one which was the most important for the king, that of Juliers and Berg, came into discussion.

To a later question of his ministers, as to what had been transacted there, the king answered, that a proposal for an amicable arrangement had been made to him, which, however, he had not been able to accept. But this did not prevent the very best understanding from existing between the several persons. There was in the hands of the king, a letter of prince Eugene to Seckendorf, in which it was stated that, if they could not bring the affair of Berg to a settlement by negotiations, measures must be taken to carry out the treaty of Berlin by force, and that the king, for this purpose, might in fulfilment of the existing pledges, rely on the support of the emperor now and for ever.

From the language of the emperor, it was surmised that he approved of the king's keeping himself in readiness immediately to take possession of the country, whenever the contingency occurred. With regard to the Polish question also, which was just turning up, the two powers were on the whole agreed, as well among each other as with Russia. The king, on his return to Berlin, shewed himself perfectly satisfied. His first conversation with the Austrian ambassador he ended with a cheer for the augustissimus, that is, the emperor. Of the emperor and empress he never

spoke but with expressions of personal attachment and veneration; and repeatedly said, that he would be faithful to the house of Austria to the last hour of his life.*

* Grumbkow, on the 20th; the king on the 26th of August to Seckendorf, in Förster, iii, III, 307.

END OF BOOK II.

HISTORY
OF THE
PRUSSIAN
MONARCHY,

FROM ITS RISE TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY

LEOPOLD RANKE,

AUTHOR OF "LIVES OF THE POPES," "HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION,"
ETC.

TRANSLATED BY

PROFESSOR DEMMLER.



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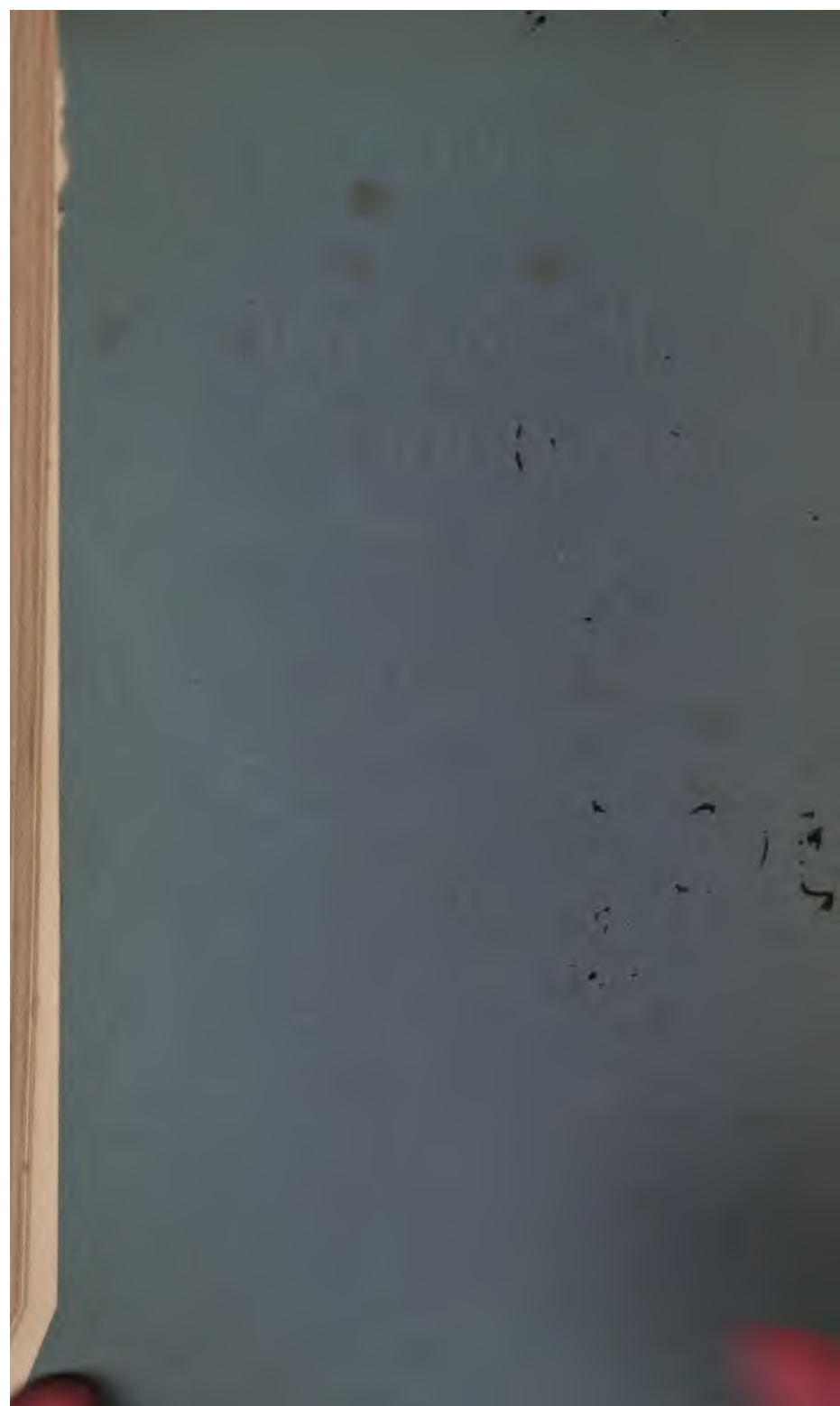
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BOOK III.

VOL. I.

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BOOK III.

OF all the leagues which have ever existed, there is none which has produced greater results, or has lasted longer, than the alliance of the three Northern powers in the nineteenth century.

Already in the first third of the eighteenth (as we have just hinted), the way was paved for it; but how many revolutions must have happened before it was firmly established, amid the conflict of forces quite different from those which then moved the world. It is very well worth the trouble to consider on what basis it was first founded, and by what causes it was again interrupted in those times. This is the very point to which our history leads us.

The alliance between Austria and Prussia rested, as we have seen, on their own particular interests, as well as on the general German ones. The former were, for Austria, the maintenance of the monarchy in all its extent and power; for Prussia, the making a fresh acquisition, by carrying out those very old claims to the inheritance on the Lower Rhine. The latter were the preservation of a good understanding between the two religious parties in Germany, and the exclusion of every foreign influence, French as well as English, which had until now prevailed.

Thus the alliance between Austria and Russia was also supported by the most important motives of general policy.

These were grounded, first of all, in the similar relation in which they both stood to the Ottoman empire, though it was not impossible but that dissensions might eventually arise from the contingency of the Turks being induced to allow greater influence to one power than to the other. But, at that time, this was not to be apprehended, as both of them, especially whilst the counsels of France remained in the ascendancy at the Divan, had nothing to expect from thence but very dangerous hostilities.

The conqueror of Zenta declared, that nothing was to be feared from the military skill of the Osmanlis, but much from their superior numbers; and a trustworthy confederate was wanted against them. For Russia, too, it would have been a very sensible loss, either in resisting or in attacking this enemy, not to see an ally like Austria on her side. She knew well that she needed a powerful Austria.

Thence it came, that Russia was ready at once to acknowledge the order of succession laid down by Charles VI. As early as August 1726, the two powers had concluded a treaty, in an historical point of view one of the most important in the eighteenth century, by which they guaranteed to each other all their possessions in Europe, and even declared that they wished to unite for common enterprises.

The king of Prussia was invited to join in this treaty, but his ministers pointed out to him, that he

would get involved by it in future complications, the extent of which could not be foreseen; that perhaps he might even, some time or other, be called upon to assist against the Turks; and he declined the offer.

On the other hand, there were relations in which his own affairs most closely coincided with those of Austria and Russia, that is to say, in Poland.

It has often been surmised, that in those times already there had been an understanding between the three powers concerning the partition of Poland. This is undoubtedly a mistake. Considering the existing relations of the contracting parties, such an idea might have very naturally occurred. For Prussia, for instance, it seemed to be almost a matter of vital consequence to acquire the then still Polish provinces on the shores of the Baltic, which had formerly been subject to the order of the Teutonic knights, and to the German Empire. Other claims were set forth by the other powers. And as, moreover, it already appeared that Poland would not be able to make any effectual resistance, plans of partition were really brought forward from time to time. One, which had originated in Charles Gustavus's head, and had been grounded upon the co-operation of Sweden, had been followed, in the year 1710, by another better adapted to the present state of affairs, probably the work of a Russian diplomatist, with which, however, Peter I.*

* Undoubtedly the plan, as Stenzel justly remarks, originated with Russia; but I find the notice that "Petrus I. had not only rejected the whole plan, but also wanted to bring to punishment those who had formed it."

would have nothing to do. On the basis of the last, there had, in the times at which we are now arrived, been made a third, which we shall presently mention. Yet, for all that, the conviction still remained alive that this aristocratical republic,—for such Poland had become under her last kings,—formed an essential link in the chain of European states, and that its ruin would draw after it many other evil consequences. Frederic William, owing to the advice which Ilgen, “faithful to death”, had given him, was averse to any great change in Poland, even though it should be attended by a considerable increase of territory.

The interest of the three parties was therefore, in the first place, merely this: not to allow, either in the vacancy of the throne, or at the occurrence of any other contingency, a power to get the ascendancy there, from which an obnoxious policy was to be apprehended. How easily this might happen, was shewn just in the case of Augustus II, who, though he owed his election to the influence of Prussia, and his restoration to the arms of Russia, nevertheless, in his latter years, followed a political line quite opposed to that of the two courts. We must say a few words about this prince and his devices.

Augustus II was a man of very extraordinary personal qualities, of a multifarious, or, as Frederic William used to say, of a “universal” grasp of mind. He had a turn for whatever he took in hand, and he could not live without always engaging in something new, be it the building of a palace or a church, the drill of

a regiment, or the arrangement of a noisy festival,* an amour, or a political intrigue. Recklessly he rushed from one exciting occupation to another, from pleasure to pleasure, without any the least regard to duty or decency. He took delight in a combination of energy and profligacy. He would never have blamed himself for prodigality, which, on the contrary, he deemed rather beneficial to his country; as the magnificence of the palaces, the number of the retainers, and the splendour of the court, gave an impulse to trade and commerce, and offered to those who devoted themselves to the fine arts a means of livelihood. But his hereditary dominions were too small to satisfy his passion for an active life, and he plunged himself into the "ever-troubled sea" of the dubious affairs of the Polish nation. Then he had at home to withstand an opposition which bowed before no written law, and could only be broken by a personal reaction on the many characters with which he had to deal. With regard to foreign relations, possession of this throne placed him in immediate contact with all that was powerful in Europe. He had a fancy for the secret ways of policy; as, for instance, at Vienna he rather neglected prince Eugene, and at Petersburg he tried, by means of the wife of his ambassador, to get access to the ladies of the empress. His pages assisted him in carrying on the correspondence which was necessary

* The Saxon coat of arms was at that time derived from a banquet, in which Frederic Barbarossa had placed a chaplet of rue on the head of one of the ancestors of that house.

for this purpose: in this way Brühl made his fortune. But for the satisfaction of his whole nature, the zest of life which was necessary for him, it was requisite that he should at the same time indulge in visions of an unbounded ambition. He once thought of transferring the supreme power in Germany to a league of princes, as the house of Austria was no more capable of upholding the dignity of the empire. He would not lose a moment, in case of the decease of Charles VI, in urging the claims which had been brought into his family by the wife of his son; and we know from Brühl that he entered into negotiations with France concerning the hereditary dominions of Austria.* If he had succeeded in carrying the point then conceded to him, and he could have combined Bohemia, and likewise Silesia, with the rich country of Saxony, as he formerly did with regard to the two Lusatias,—then emancipated from the imperial power, what a part he could have acted in Germany! Yet with this Augustus II was not content. After having for a long time considered and vacillated as to the manner in which he could rule Poland, and there settle his dynasty, he at length decided that he must try to make himself sovereign at least in a part of it. But in order to do this, and to meet with no resistance

* Letter of Belleisle, May 10, 1741: "J'avais commencé par demander au comte de Brhulle quel était le partage projeté par le traité du marquis de Monti; il m'a dit, que l'électeur de Saxe devait avoir alors toute la Bohême, y compris la Silésie et la Moravie."

from the neighbouring powers, he offered them some of the provinces of that kingdom. Russia was to have Lithuania; Prussia, the country called Polish Prussia: the former, however, without Wilna, and the latter without Dantzic, which towns he reserved for himself. To Austria, he would have yielded the district of Zips. Of the different projects of partition, the first which was ever taken into serious consideration actually originated with a king of Poland. In the autumn of 1732, Augustus II made to the Prussian ambassador, Marschall Von Biberstein, proposals which were not at all ambiguous. Marschall asked him,* whether he had already gained over to it some magnates of the realm, and whether he could reckon on the army? The answers of the king shew that he had as yet done little towards it, nor did he deem it necessary, as it was his opinion that he would soon have done with the Poles, if the powers were only in earnest. Marschall asked further, whether he had secured the consent also of the fourth of his neighbours, the grand seignior? to which the king replied, with one of those pompous phrases of which he was so fond, that "the eagles which look at the sun would not blink before the crescent."

In the beginning of the year 1733, Augustus made

* The instruction by which he was authorized to do so is to be found in Förster, ii, 119. Yet instead of [No. 5] "*que la Saxe prétend de l'empire,*" one ought to read, "*que le roi de Pologne prétend de l'empereur.*" Among the declarations of Augustus II there is also the following: "*Il y a deux chemins, la douceur et la force, et il n'y a point de risque.*"

a journey to Poland. At his urgent request, General Grumbkow, whom he had asked for as the confidant of the king of Prussia, was sent to Crossen to welcome him, and very characteristic was the conference which was there held between them. Grumbkow objected chiefly on the strength of the relation to Austria, which only a short time before had come to a compromise with Poland, and could so much the less enter into such doubtful undertakings, as, on account of the succession, it must keep itself in readiness for a war with France. King Augustus did not allow himself to be thus baffled. He never considered a treaty a great obstacle; and as to the danger of a war, he would not allow that it existed, unless in the empire they set about electing a king of the Romans. Grumbkow hinted, that if, nevertheless, war should break out, and he united himself with France, he should be attacked in his hereditary Saxon dominions by Austria and Prussia at once. The king answered, that he did not despair of defending himself, yet that he wished to be on good terms with Prussia; and that, if that power supported him, he would shew himself yielding also in the affairs of Juliers and Berg.* In the old German manner, the consultation was continued at the banquet, where the king was not sparing of his champagne. He asked for a map of Poland, and traced out the plan for a campaign, in which either Russians and Prussians

* Explicit Report of Grumbkow, 1733, with which the other statements made elsewhere concerning this interview, may be taken *cum grano salis*.

should act alone, or else he should let his troops join them. He feasted his eyes on the large tracts of country which he hoped to gain for his house. They sat it out for six hours, and, hot work as they made of it, neither of the two practised politicians committed himself. It once seemed as if the king was afraid of having said too much, when he let out that the court of Vienna had caused advances to be made to him, mentioning, at the same time, the person by whom they had been done; but Grumbkow would not believe that he could ever say too much, and at the most concluded from his words, that Augustus himself had made offers at Vienna. Grumbkow had been much on his guard during the sitting, and had drunk more water than wine. The king was much astonished when he saw him the next morning coming in fresh and quite brisk, while he himself felt rather confused in his head. As he so stood with half-naked legs, warming himself at the fireside, with all the appearances of increasing decay, one would not have believed that he was revolving in his mind projects which affected the destinies of the world. Grumbkow almost thought that he was not in earnest, and that the French party perhaps had suggested these plans, with the view "of sowing discord between the eagles."*

Although the three powers might have felt a greater

* "Toute l'idée que je m'en peux former, c'est que le plan en question est un puncto studiato de la cabale Française pour occuper et diviser les aigles, qui en cas qu'ils entreront dans ce chimérique plan, ou ce qui est le plus apparent, pour en cas de refus pouvoir

indications to enter upon the partition of Poland than what may be perceived at the time, yet the other political plans which Augustus II pursued would have diverted them from it. How little impression could be made with his idea of an armed league of princes, upon the king of Prussia, closely allied as the latter was with Austria! Frederick William replied with a simple remark which, however, hit the point. He asked who would have to command such an army? Had the king of Prussia would certainly leave it to nobody else, nor would any one leave it to him; they had, therefore, better remain under their usual chief. Very dangerous to them was his connexion with France. The support of the Austrian succession formed at that moment the centre of their common endeavours. To oppose it in conjunction with France, and yet to engage them to share in an undertaking against Poland, were ideas inconsistent with each other.

Precisely in order to put an end to the scandalous fickleness of the Saxon policy, the powers had for some time carried on negotiations which aimed at quite a different object.

As early as in the year 1726, Russia and Prussia had agreed to unite their efforts, that, at the next vacancy of the throne in Poland, a prince might be elected who would neither be dangerous to the liberty

faire voir au patron combien peu on souhaite de le favoriser, même dans les occasions où les autres princes trouvent aussi leur avantage."

of that country nor to his neighbours, and who might be expected to keep the old compacts of the republic with Brandenburg as well as with Russia.*

In the year 1729, many transactions passed between the three powers concerning the question, whether they ought not beforehand to combine to exclude by name the two candidates who were next to be expected, Stanislaus Lesczynski and the electoral prince of Saxony. Russia and Prussia agreed to it; Austria was averse, as she wished to avoid a breach with Saxony. But, as the two former would not do anything in which the latter could not join, they did not pronounce the exclusion in form, but confined themselves, as formerly, to vague expressions. The treaty, which was concluded in October 1729, and, after the accession of the empress Anne, confirmed by this princess in 1730, is, properly speaking, merely a repetition of the former one. It contains nothing new, except a more stringent clause concerning the protection to be enjoyed by the dissenters of the Evangelical and Greek confessions. The words of it had such a harmless sound, that it could even be communicated to the king of Poland.

In a short time it was found advisable, especially at Petersburg, to come to a more definite understanding concerning the candidate to whom the preference was

* Osterman said in July, that the electoral prince appeared too dangerous to his master; in October, that his Russian imperial majesty would best like a Piast to get the crown. He was even
Austria had been drawn into the affair, and had
ations.

to be given in the election. Prussia and Russia lighted upon a Polish magnate, who derived his descent from the Piasta, a prince Sanguszko, and gave it as their opinion, that, as he managed his estates with greater care than others, he would be able to do for himself without standing in need of much foreign assistance, and that yet he was not ambitious enough to excite the apprehensions of his neighbours.* The court of Vienna, on the other hand, proposed the infant Don Emanuel of Portugal.

It seems very extraordinary that a Portuguese infant should mount the Polish throne; yet it is not quite such an extreme case as it may appear at first sight. Don Emanuel was, on his mother's side, grandson of that elector palatine who, on a former occasion, supported likewise by Brandenburg, had with rather fair hopes aspired to the Polish throne; and he was first cousin to the emperor. He had long left Portugal. It is not exactly known whether this was really done, as it was then said, because they intended to

* This treaty contains a mutual guarantee, especially of that country which both their majesties possessed on the shores of the Baltic (§ 2), and some secret articles. One of the latter, concerning Sleswic, is to be found in Dumont, viii, 2, 135. In another it is stated: "And if in future it be the will of God that the election of a new king of Poland should be come to, the said royal and imperial majesties will not only then, but also from henceforth, unite their counsels, that the royal throne of Poland may be occupied by a successor, who shall be as little dangerous to the liberty of Poland as to his neighbours." The king of Prussia adds, that his opinion in this affair was no other but that the successor should and must be a Polish nobleman by birth.

oblige him to take orders. In a word, he left his country without the knowledge of the king, his brother. In Paris, too, the infant rid himself with adroit determination of the supervision which the Portuguese ambassador wanted to exercise over him. He said that he wished "to learn his trade in the Imperial army;" and he really distinguished himself in the profession of arms. In the battle of Peterwaradin (1716), he rushed into the enemy's ranks with a boldness which gained for him a splendid eulogium from prince Eugene. Since then, he had visited most of the courts of Europe, and acquired a refinement which was not national but European, and also a certain reputation among strangers as well as his countrymen. He was, doubtless, recommended likewise by the expectation which was entertained that his brother, king John V, (who, by great works of splendour and utility, had got the credit of extraordinary wealth) would support him in carrying the very expensive election. The court of Vienna encouraged him to it in repeated letters.* The opposition in which he must feel that he was placed against the Bourbons, whose ascendancy might easily react upon Portugal, seemed a sufficient motive to incline him towards it.

* Confer a letter of prince Eugene, August 23, 1716, Writings, iv, 99. Foscari, *Storia Arcana*. Madame d'Orléans mentions him in July 1716. Oliveyra dedicated to him his *Mémoires de Portugal*. In the dedication he extols him in the most pompous phrases, as "toute à la fois un grand prince, un guerrier redoutable, un général habile, un soldat magnanime, un seigneur généreux, un Chrétien vertueux, un héros consommé."

The king of Prussia consented without difficulty to the proposal. He had no other object than to get a quiet neighbour, who would not put himself at variance with his present system. The empress Anne hesitated for a moment. A stay which Don Emanuel had made at Petersburg seems not to have furthered his interests. But in the autumn of 1732, she pronounced herself unambiguously for him. One of the great nobles of her court, count Löwenwolde, appeared with this declaration in Berlin, and added to it another of no inconsiderable importance for Prussia herself.

There had often before been a question of getting the duchy of Courland for a Prussian prince, especially in order to oppose to the intention of the Poles of dissolving it, and dividing it into vaivodes, another combination. Peter I already had shewn himself very much for it, and now the empress Anne offered the king, more definitively than ever, "from friendship and esteem for the house of Brandenburg," to procure for him in the impending vacancy the possession of that country.

Frederic William would not usually enter a second time into projects which had once miscarried. He was afraid of being foiled once more, of incurring great expenses, and reaping nothing but annoyance. But when an offer thus positive was now made in a manner which was so flattering for his house, he deemed it all but a duty towards the latter to listen to this proposal.

It was at that hunting seat at Wusterhausen that

Löwenwolde and Seckendorf, quite alone with the king, treated about it. Only when the points were settled in their order, did Frederic William let his ministers into the secret, and then, after some deliberation, he concluded, December 13, 1732, an agreement, which has been named that of Löwenwolde.

The main treaty was drawn up in such a manner, that if it were necessary, it might also be communicated to others. It chiefly stipulates, that in Poland the elective franchise of the nation should be maintained; but that it must not be abused by a faction in favour of France, or of Stanislaus Lesczynski; that, in the same manner, they would respect the freedom of election exercised by the equestrian body of Courland, provided, however, that it was not employed to the detriment of the three allies. Points of a more critical nature were kept close in secret articles. One of them states, that everything consistent with the free election of the Poles should be done to raise the Portuguese infant Emanuel to the Polish throne. A sum is named which would be laid out for this purpose; but, for all that, no condition was to be imposed upon the new king which might make him odious to his subjects, and care should be taken to procure for him a party in the country by means of a marriage. The second secret article relates to Courland. The empress promises to employ every means, consistent with the freedom of election of the equestrian body in Courland, to direct its choice to the second Prussian prince Augustus William, or, in case

of his decease, to one of his younger brothers. This choice should then be guaranteed by Austria, Prussia, and Russia.* •

It is true that Seckendorf did not then formally sign the treaty for which he had very actively negotiated, and that Löwenwolde also expressly reserved the ratification of his empress. But how could this have been doubted of, as the proposal had been brought forward by both of the ambassadors?

The powers appeared, on the whole, to be more closely united than ever. General Seckendorf acted in Berlin the same part which Königsegg once did at Madrid. Reports coming in from foreign courts were communicated to him, and with his own hand he wrote the instructions which Grumbkow received for that interview with Augustus II. The anniversary of the Prussian crown, the 18th of January, was solemnly celebrated at St. Petersburg by the empress Anne.

It was considered as the corner-stone of this alliance, that prince Antony Ulric of Brunswic-Bevern, the nephew of the empress, who in a short time was to become the brother-in-law of the crown prince of Prussia, was selected as the husband of princess Anne of Mecklenburg, the then heiress presumptive of the throne of Russia. This alliance of the powers was

* It has been asserted, that in the treaty Berg also had been guaranteed by Russia; but this is contrary to every notion of the independence of the empire in its domestic affairs. There is not a word said about it.

expressly directed against the designs of Augustus II. It is not to be presumed that he would ever have been capable of breaking it up.

But, at that moment, the prince had already succumbed to the maladies which he was unwilling to confess to others, or, perhaps, even to himself. Having summoned a diet, he could no more open it in person. He died in the night between January the 31st and February the 1st, at Warsaw.*

It was of itself important, that this ever-restless energy had vanished from the earth, which presumed to move the east and the west, and to transform the different systems of policy. But, by the death of Augustus, that great vacancy of the Polish throne occurred, which had always formed the points on which the movements of European policy hinged, and was still about to do so.

Without any regard to the opposition which was to be expected, France took the part of Stanislaus Lesczynski. Lewis XV, the son-in-law of that prince, deemed it to be almost a point of honour that he should again mount the throne from which he had been driven; and he provided his ambassador at Warsaw with the means of gaining a party for him—

* It is almost an inherent characteristic of his relations to the Prussian court, which Grumbkow tells of himself in one of his letters. Grumbkow, who had returned from that interview, excited and deeply affected, to Berlin, thought once during the night that he saw before him the king standing upright in his night-dress, with closed eyes. "My dear general Grumbkow," said the apparition, "I died on the 31st of January at Warsaw."

for the custom still remained that votes should chiefly be procured by presents; the Poles wished for it. One of their most powerful magnates was heard to say, that honours would not do alone; that money had already been given before, and that thus it should be both now and hereafter. Yet it would be erroneous to believe that all had been effected by money. Stanislaus had partisans who declared for him from a natural inclination, or also because it was consistent with their political views. Many asserted that he had never ceased to be king; one had only to recall him.

Now it is as clear as day, that such an intention must have met with disapprobation both in Russia and in Austria. It was by Russian arms that Stanislaus had been expelled, and the prime minister at Petersburg, count Ostermann, without mincing matters, gave out that Russia would consider a new election of the banished one as a declaration of war. At Vienna, they had not, indeed, an equally strong political reason to oppose this return; but they apprehended, lest, under Stanislaus, the French influence should get the ascendancy in Poland, and from thence, in the impending struggle about the succession, become dangerous for the future destinies of the house of Austria. It could not be said that there was any new feature in this. For this very reason the arrangements had been made, which we have just before mentioned, and a candidate fixed upon, who, as it seemed, was agreeable to all parties. As far as we can find, Don Emanuel had really friends in Poland.

But then another consideration arose at Vienna. Augustus II had left a son, the heir of his name, not, however, of his talents, either for good or for evil,* nor of his political versatility. Through his wife, he was nearly connected with the Austrian family. Concerning her claims to the succession he now made some declarations, which satisfied the court. In the middle of March already, prince Eugene remarked, at one of his usual evening parties, that the Saxon ambassador gave him such assurances, that one might hope to be better satisfied with the successor than with the predecessor. And was it not of the greatest consequence to gain him over, as among those who had any claims he stood, if not in the first, yet in the second place? It is possible that the mother also of the new electress of Saxony, namely, the empress-dowager, used her interest for it. But the main thing was the hope of getting rid of a very obnoxious claim, and, at the same time, seeing a trustworthy friend sitting on the Polish throne. As the heir of a late king, who had done everything to make a party, must, if supported by the powers, evidently carry the election with much greater ease than a Portuguese infant who was only known

* Foscarini relatione di Vienna. "Connosciutolo di spiriti differenti dal padre, e disposto pur anche a riconoscere la pragmatica, si risolvette (la corte) d'inalzarlo;—abandonando l'infante considerato di non aver costumi idonei a conciliarsi favore nella nazione Polacca, dove nemmeno riteneva capital di adherenze proprie e di amici. E credesi inoltre che a questo cangiamento—contribuisse non poco in segreto l'imperatrice vedova, tratta dall'ambizione di veder la figliuola con una corona sul capo."

to few, they inclined in Russia also to this arrangement.

But then the question arose, how the third power, Prussia, would receive this change of policy, and whether it would approve of it, and take a share in it.

It may be seen at first sight, that the necessity of warding off the French influence from Poland did not exist for Prussia with the same urgency as for the other two powers, to which the machinations of France, on the side of Turkey, had often before become dangerous, and especially for the house of Austria, in Hungary. If we consider the general state of the political world, Prussia, with regard to its particular interests, stood in no opposition to France. But it might have become very irksome to her, if her nearest neighbour in Germany, with whom, for various reasons, quarrels and misunderstandings were scarcely to be avoided, got now an accession of strength by the possession of the Polish crown, which even asserted still an old claim to feudal superiority. Was Frederic William tamely to consent, that instead of a Piast, for whom he had always wished, or at least a harmless Portuguese, in whose election he would have acquiesced, an influential German prince should mount the Polish throne, from whom he had to expect a policy which in many points must clash with his own? Was he even to decide upon executing, also in favour of this candidate, the obligation of an armed defence, which he had taken upon himself for quite a different contingency?

He declared himself not averse, even now, to join with Russia and Austria, provided that Saxony would accept of the conditions which he must stipulate in exchange for such a great concession. In May, the negotiations had been so far advanced that he enumerated them.*

He stipulated, first of all, the acknowledgment and furtherance of his claims to the grand duchy of Berg, and now to Courland as well. This was the main point. For, what he required besides,—acknowledgment of the East Frisian rights, and also of the royal title; favourable terms in the redemption of Elbing and in the traffic of salt,—were either matters of course, or of little consequence. The Prussian ministers, and the king himself, did not doubt but that the elector of Saxony would enter upon the proposal, especially since, at the same time, hopes were given of other advantages.

Yet the court of Dresden thought that, being sure of Austria and Prussia, it would be able to pursue its object, even without Prussian help.

Its answer was couched in the most civil and friendly expressions. But it was a refusal, absolute, and in every point. As to those which concerned

* Prussian postulation, May 12, that his royal highness the elector should promise, that he would not carry further the law-suit at the Aulic council in the affair of Cleves, Juliers, and Berg, but would entirely drop it, and guarantee to his royal majesty, and to his royal and electoral successors, and also, as the case may be, to his female issue, the duchy of Berg, together with the lordships of Ravenstein and Winnenthal.

Poland, it referred to the limitations by which a king was bound in that realm, without even offering its good services; so likewise in the affair of Berg, to the relation towards the co-heirs; the East Frisian title it promised to acknowledge, if the emperor did, just as if it had been in its power to deny it then; even the acknowledgment of the royal title appeared still doubtful.

A second answer, which soon afterwards arrived, was not more favourable.* King Frederic William said, that he was as one fallen from the clouds, and he must speak plain German with the Saxon.

But if he looked more about him, it could not escape his observation, that since the death of Augustus II, his position with regard to his allies had on the whole been changed.

The empress Anne had not yet ratified the treaty which had been offered in her name. Count Löwenwolde, to whom a cypher had been given, by means of which a secret correspondence might be kept up with his court, had not made any use of it, and had never written a word. All inquiries on the subject were answered in an evasive manner, and it was evident that at Petersburg they did not wish to be troubled about the matter any further; behaviour which may be easily explained, if it be true, as contemporary historians unanimously assert, that the elector of Saxony had promised to the chief chamberlain and favourite

* June 8, 1733, directed to the Prussian minister, Luderitz.

of the empress, Biron, that very Courland, which, according to the treaty, was to fall to a Prussian prince.*

With regard to Austria, however, an incident happened which cut the king to the very heart.

In June 1733, the marriage of the crown prince with the princess of Bevern, which the Austrian court had so zealously supported, was to be celebrated. The subjects of Prussia had been apprized of it in a circular, by which the otherwise customary present [aid] which they had to make was dispensed with. The grandfather of the princess, duke Lewis Rudolf, father of the empress, had undertaken to have the wedding at the castle of Salzdahlum, at that time renowned for its treasures of art; and the king and queen of Prussia had already arrived there with their households, when Seckendorf, who accompanied the court on this journey also, received a letter from prince Eugene, in which he was ordered, even then, to give the affair, if possible, a different turn. Formerly when an alliance of England and Prussia against Austria was to be apprehended, the imperial court had done everything to break it up; now, as it had to

* In an opinion of Tulemeier, Feb. 4, 1734, it is stated, that Biron was so much the less deserving a present, "as, to please the court of Vienna, he is the only and sole cause why the Russian empress has been so deeply engaged with the elector of Saxony, and why the Russian imperial court now wants to force us, as it were, *à la pointe de son épée*, to assist in confirming the elector of Saxony on the Polish throne, and thereby work for our own loss and ruin."

struggle with France only, and was on friendly terms with England, as well as with Prussia, it appeared advantageous to reunite the two powers first of all, and next, the two families. Seckendorf had once before ventured to hint at it; but the king had in his tobacco club expressed his disgust. The affair was, however, too important; the renewal of the great European alliance against France seemed to depend on it; and Seckendorf, although doubtful of the result, —as also Grumbkow would have nothing to do with it,—was obliged to proceed to a formal communication, and that without delay, before it should be too late. The king was still lying in bed when Seckendorf made his appearance, as he himself tells us, with a smiling countenance. His proposal was to the effect, that the king, in spite of what had happened, should now, after all, marry his crown prince to an English princess, whilst, on the other hand, his intended bride might be betrothed to the prince of Wales. It is clear that in Vienna, also, they did not know the king, his intentions, and manner of thinking. They fancied, as it were, that they had been the managers of the intrigue of which the English court had complained, and they had no idea of the earnestness of purpose and principle which was slumbering beneath the excitable and violent temper of this prince, and which lay at the bottom of all that he did. The king quietly listened to Seckendorf; he made him read the letter of prince Eugene, and the English notes referring to it. His temper was not even **then**

roused ; but he declared most positively, that a scheme like this must not be thought of ; that it was most likely devised by his enemies in order to present him to the world as a fickle man, utterly without honour ; but he would not bring such a disgrace upon himself, nor act against his conscience. Without any further delay, the affianced pair were married, June 12, 1733, by Mosheim, whose marriage sermon has been printed ; and the prince, at least, had no more this objection against it, that his bride was no English princess, having quite given up this fancy since the marriage of his sister.

But the king, who always engaged in his affairs with all his heart and soul, felt not a little estranged by what had happened. This personal offence was all that was wanting to revive in him the consciousness of his own interests, in as far as they differed from those of the other two powers, and his ministers could now more successfully remind him of them. The negotiations immediately assumed quite a different tone.

Yet, in June, Seckendorf asked the king to join in a declaration by which the powers were to pronounce the exclusion of Stanislaus Lesczynski from the Polish throne. But he met no more with the former readiness.

The ministers reminded the king that the Löwenwold treaty had not been ratified by Austria and Russia, and could not therefore bind Prussia either. — ark which had held good against England,

they now urged against Russia and Austria, that Prussia would only be a subordinate power, if she so obsequiously followed in the track of what had been resolved upon by her two neighbours.* They went on to say, that if Prussia declared for keeping out Stanislaus, she would be obliged also to act up to it. Now, it was known that the king of France would consider the exclusion of his father-in-law as a declaration of war. He would, with little difficulty, seize hold of the western Prussian possessions—Cleves, Guelderland, Neufchatel. At the Polish frontiers also, perhaps even in Pomerania, hostile attacks might be apprehended. And all this for what purpose? To place a prince on the Polish throne, who refused every reasonable concession; to assist in establishing an alliance from which one might, perhaps, some day be obliged to receive laws;—consequently for one's own ruin.

As Seckendorf referred to the obligations which the king had incurred by the former treaties, and, on the strength of these, required him immediately to place troops on the Polish frontier, the king ordered his ministers—for he would fulfil whatever he was bound to do, but not go one step further—to tell him on their oath and duty the real truth, and that, not merely from their remembrance, but they were to betake themselves to the archives, and to look for the contents of the ratified treaties in the original documents.

* Representation of the ministers, June 23.

This was carried into effect in due form. Grumbkow, also, at the king's wish, had to take part in this business.

There were found two ratified treaties only, which were to be taken into consideration; that of Berlin in 1728, and the renewal of the Russian one in the year 1730. In the former, as well as in the latter, these matters were mentioned only in general terms.

The ministers declared, on their sacred oath and duty, that there was not a word in them by which the king was bound to keep Stanislaus from the Polish throne. If, at a later period, it seemed that Prussia had shared in this design, it had only been under the supposition that the Löwenwold treaty had been ratified; which, however, was never the case. They gave it as their opinion that the king was quite free to act as he pleased in this matter, and that, whatever he might do, the emperor was still bound to fulfil his other promises with regard to Berg.

Hereupon notice was given to the two imperial courts, that his Prussian majesty could not enter upon such a dangerous undertaking, unless, in the first place, Saxony complied with his demands, and, in the next place, compensation were guaranteed to him for all the losses which he might possibly sustain in the war. According to the style of that time, it is stated in an official communication of July 9th, that "a proportionate *convenience* and a *dedommagement*" was demanded. Concerning this, a new agreement in due form should be made between the courts, unless it

were preferred, even now, to ratify the Löwenwold treaty.

The negotiations on the subject were carried on some time longer.

Seckendorf said, that when the affair of Juliers and Berg was perfectly settled, his court would not hesitate to guarantee Courland to a Prussian prince. The Prussian ministers, however, refused their consent to such a distant condition.

Seckendorf persisted in asserting, that the imperial courts would not certainly make any agreement with Saxony, unless the latter first satisfied the king of Prussia with regard to his "very moderate and reasonable demands." But in this he said more than he really knew. At that moment the affair was already settled at Vienna in a different manner. In the presence of the emperor, several conferences were held on the question, whether they should, even without the participation of Prussia, come to terms with Saxony, or not. On the 16th of July, they at last determined, as Prussia made so many difficulties, to declare for the exclusion of Stanislaus, and to conclude the treaty with Saxony alone. It was signed on the same day.

There is indeed a hope expressed in it, that Prussia would join in the election, and the elector of Saxony pay regard to his reasonable wishes; yet there is, after all, an immense difference between delaying an agreement until the condition upon which it is made to depend is accepted, and signing before this has been done. It was easy to foresee, that the court of Saxony

would yield nothing to the king of Prussia, unless it felt obliged to do so. Nevertheless, the treaty was concluded at Vienna, and the Russian court acceded to it.

We will not blame the diplomatists, who at that time presided over the policy of the two powers, for their proceedings. The treaty, the non-ratification of which gave offence to Prussia, was, for that very reason, binding neither upon the one nor the other. Whilst Prussia complained of the agreement with Saxony not having been delayed longer, the answer of the courts also had something plausible in it. It was said that the refusal of the king of Prussia to pronounce the exclusion of Stanislaus Lesczynski had made it impossible for them to wait any longer, because they would otherwise have had to apprehend that he would settle himself before anything could be done against him.

Yet it cannot be denied that they had essentially altered their policy. They preferred, to their former close alliance with Prussia, that with the elector of Saxony, whom they themselves had previously combated and excluded.

If we correctly estimate the position of affairs at the Russian court, everything turned upon this, that as Löwenwolde had made the conclusion of an alliance with Austria and Prussia almost his own private concern, the first chamberlain, Biron, promoted the alliance with Austria and Saxo-Poland. Biron was, however, by far the more powerful of the two. It

was then said of him, that all that he wanted to be emperor, was the name; so decisive was his word in every respect.

Austria, which undoubtedly in this also co-operated by her influence, had always that one object in view, to have her settlement of succession generally acknowledged. For this purpose, nothing seemed to be of greater moment than to get rid of the claims of the elector of Saxony, which might, indeed, acquire considerable weight, if he entered into the transactions for which the way was already paved. To gain him over, the sole and decisive expedient was the accession to the throne of Poland. To impose upon him conditions in this affair in favour of a third person, by which his good will might be put in jeopardy, seemed unadvisable. The greatest hopes, on the whole, were founded upon this agreement. Even if France, in conjunction perhaps with the Bavarian Palatine courts, should at last persevere in her opposition, it was intended to form against her a great European league. It was hoped to unite Russia, Saxo-Poland, the maritime powers, and Prussia,—an alliance stronger than any other which had ever been, especially as nothing more was to be apprehended from Sweden, so that France would have to think of her own defence, rather than be able to resolve upon an attack.

The two courts, and their diplomatists, as generally is the case, had in view the nearest and most important advantages to themselves alone. Yet in their

calculations, they were so far wrong only, that they made too light of the king of Prussia. Out of regard to Austria, Frederic William had rejected the English, and afterwards the Saxon offers, had repulsed these two courts, and even incurred their enmity. Now they wanted to carry him along in the opposite direction, and he was required to enter with the one into a connexion which had in the mean time become odious to him, and with the other, at least into confederation. People seemed to believe that, by the promise concerning Berg, the king was fettered with respect to everything else. Did it not seem as if his alliance in the northern affair had been sought for, merely because Augustus II was untrustworthy and versatile, and fostered dangerous views? But to the Prussian monarch, a Saxon king on the Polish throne, less ambitious, still more obliged to the two powers, and besides so zealously Roman Catholic, was almost more obnoxious than the last one. And how would it be, if the alliance with England and Holland was then concluded? Prussia would have been forced along by the others, without her opinion being asked. The king said once, that they would coop him up, like a parrot in a cage, so that he could not move. Frederic William was not the man not to feel this at once, or quietly submit to it. That Prussia should be able to act in accordance with those principles which were natural and congenial to her, was the height of his ambition, and the inmost political motive which animated him. He determined in his mind to keep

those matters asunder, as it had been from the very beginning; to act up to the secret alliance, as far as it went; but as to the rest, to follow his own way. To separate from the emperor, though it were only in one point, was most painful to him; and he often expressed this sentiment with a sincerity which does not admit of any doubt.* But there was no help for it, and for the first time it must be done in the Polish affairs.

If we want to see how his policy, on the whole, took a different position, we must enter with him into those circumstances, as well as into the complications connected with them.

He returned to his first idea, that the Poles ought to elect one of themselves as their king, not precisely Stanislaus, whom he did not indeed exclude, nor recommend either, but one of less political importance. There were also a number of Polish nobles—Wisnowiecki, Radzivill, Sanguski, Lubomirski, Sapieha—who, without being friends of Saxony, would not approve of a man being now called to the throne who had repeatedly been declared by the republic an enemy to his country.† In several little diets, it was de-

* Let us mention only one marginal note of the king, dated March 26, 1733: "My enemies may do whatever they like, I will not leave the emperor, or the emperor must kick me off with his feet; otherwise I shall be his with all my faith, and my blood, and remain so to my grave."

† "Stanislaum in fundamento antiquissimarum legum et constitutionum præsertim vero de annis 1593, 1607, 1670, nomine tenus per constitutiones reipublicæ de annis 1703, 4 § 10, 16, 18,

creed, that the Piast to be elected should have no connexion with foreign powers, and be equal to the other nobles. And certainly nothing would have been more desirable than that the nation could have given itself an independent chief belonging to neither party. But the nobles mentioned before could not come to an agreement as to whom they would elect as such, and several of them wished to get the crown for themselves.* On the other hand, the Potocks, with the whole tribe of the lesser nobles, and at the same time the Czartoriskys and Poniatowskys, who were otherwise opposed to them, pronounced for Stanislaus. Already, in fixing the oath of the general confederation, they got a majority, although not without various acts of violence and struggles. They expunged that condition from the formula. The primate Theodore Potocks, archbishop of Gnesen, and the French ambassador, kept the party together. When the diet for the election assembled towards the end of August, a clear majority appeared for Stanislaus. Of those that were opposed to him, some did not venture to show themselves; others withdrew themselves after some time; and at the first scrutinies, on the 11th and 12th of September, all was decided. On the field of the election the several vaivodes and povjatys (districts) had taken up the places assigned to them;

pro hoste patriæ tyranno in omne ævum inhabili ad terram Poloniæ et pro ineligiblei declaratum." The diary of the election was printed at the time.

* "Quot capita tot sensus; quot sensus, tot reges." (Letter from Lithuania.)

then the primate of the realm began to ride along with a suite of five hundred horsemen, first to the great Poles, who all shouted, long live Stanislaus. Thus did also the rest. Of all the *povjatys*, two only, those of Sandomir, excluded him. One nobleman named the elector of Saxony, not, however, without thereby drawing upon himself tumultuous ill-treatment. The primate was afterwards assailed with the reproach, that the dissentient voices had been drowned in the cheers of his retainers; yet there is no doubt but that, on the field of the election, there reigned all but unanimity. At length, also, the last opposition, that of a Volhynian, died away, and the general applause hailed Stanislaus, who himself, secretly and in disguise, had traversed the German and Prussian countries; and he was proclaimed king with the usual ceremonies.

The Poles considered the right of the free election of a king as a prerogative which distinguished them above all the nations of the world. In the discourse with which the marshal of the convocation, Massalski, opened the assembly on the election field, their good fortune is extolled, since God had preserved in them the remembrance of that liberty which he had given to men from the very beginning of the creation. Among other people, he said, it might happen that an hereditary ruler, whose hands were still tied by the swaddling bands, dictated laws; but the submission of the Poles sprang from their free will. It excites our moral pity to see how, notwithstanding all this

pride, they never roused themselves to any act of true independence; and they almost unconsciously allowed themselves to be carried along by an influence which, we shall not exactly say, was created, but at all events was supported, by money. Powerful Russia had announced to them that she would consider it as a declaration of war, if they elected Stanislaus; and nothing was more certain than that this threat would be acted up to. What precautions were taken to meet such an attack? Nothing was planned, and nothing prepared. As things went, the Russians not only met with no resistance, but even a better support than they could ever have expected. The dissentients, who had separated from the diet of the election and betaken themselves to Praga,—offended still more particularly by the fact, that on that occasion the return of the messengers sent to them had not even been waited for, but the primate had been obliged at once to proclaim Stanislaus,—placed themselves under the protection of the Russian troops, who, invited by them, approached under the command of Lacy.* But then nothing remained to them but to give their votes to the candidate whom the empress and a few bishops proposed to them. Yet before the term of the diet convened for the election had quite expired, they returned to the neighbourhood of Warsaw, and on their side also occupied an election field, where, in former

* Manstein, *Mémoires sur la Russie*, p. 33. Seyler, *Life of Stanislaus*, 336, with some manifestos instructive in spite of their violence.

times, one king at least, Henry of Anjou, had been inaugurated. Here, not without imitating the old traditionary forms, as far as their small number would allow, they nominated, October 5th, 1733, the elector of Saxony as king of Poland. - In an adjoining wood, the Russians were standing. There were not yet more of them than 12,000. Who would not have expected but that a spirited nobility, nearly 100,000 strong, would have risen against them, and thrown them back? But the times of such energy were passed. At that period, the Poles set all their hopes on the help of France.*

Nor was there anywhere else in the world such a lively interest in that Polish affair as was felt in France. A number of rich private individuals,—married men, nobles of the court,—sent to the friends of Stanislaus considerable sums by way of Amsterdam and Hamburg, and supported his election. In the chapel of the palace of Versailles, a *Te Deum* was chaunted on account of it. In Paris, an intended illumination could only be prevented by a mandate forbidding it. We have already mentioned that Louis XV had caused to be declared, that he would consider the exclusion of his father-in-law as a declaration of war, from that court which pronounced it.

In the face of each other appeared these two threats,—that of Russia, that she would consider the election of Stanislaus,—and that of France, that she would

* Lettre d'un Seigneur Polonais, écrite de Königsberg, Sept, 10, 1735. *Œuvres du philosophe bienfaisant*, i, 88.

consider his exclusion, as a declaration of war. Yet there is a great difference between them. Russia directed her menaces against the Polish nation, in as far as it should declare itself for Stanislaus; France, on the contrary, by no means threatened the Poles who opposed him, but her views were chiefly directed against the courts themselves, particularly against Austria.

We know with what jealousy the progress of the affair of the succession was watched at Versailles. This was doubly the case, when it was considered that the duke of Lorraine was destined to be the husband of the heiress of Austria, as well as Roman emperor, and that thereby his country was to be drawn into the great aggregate of the imperial possessions. How often was the pacific disposition of cardinal Fleury found fault with, for neglecting to oppose the accomplishment of such an event, whilst Lorraine would soon form a terrible military bulwark against France! Marshal Villars, in whom the recollections of the age of Louis XIV were still alive, once asked the cardinal, in full privy council, whether the device was not quite as dangerous to France as the league of Augsburg once had been? and this being evident, whether they ought not now to appeal to arms, as they had done then? Louis XIV, he said, had had no ally, but now they had some.

However peaceful cardinal Fleury appeared to be, nevertheless,—and we shall find that in many more cases,—in him also the old principles of the French

policy survived, which were bent on general ascendancy; only that he set to work less boisterously and less impatiently than his predecessors, making his preparations more quietly. What he was doing now was simply this, that he wanted to secure himself allies. He had for a long time attached to himself the Palatinate and Bavaria, amongst other means, by the promise to support the former in the affair of Berg. He succeeded in gaining over the king of Sardinia, in whose councils some ministers, who had been offended by the court of Vienna, had the leading influence; and, above all, every difference was removed which might still exist with Spain. A treaty was negotiated, and after a short time concluded, in which the two powers united for an armed resistance against the marriage of the duke of Lorraine with the elder daughter of the Roman emperor, as it placed the safety of the house of Bourbon in jeopardy.* All the schemes revived which the Bourbons had ever fostered, and from the attainment of which they had only been hindered by the intervention of the maritime powers, and of the German Protestants.

Fleury is reported to have said, that he thought of winning on one card from Austria a couple of kingdoms.

This card, in the hazard of politics and of war, was the Polish succession. He certainly likewise cared to carry it; but he prized still much more the opportu-

* November 7, 1733. In Cantillo 277, where it is spoken of as "Primer pacto de familia entro as coronas de España y Francia."

nity of renewing the old struggle against Austria under favourable auspices. He might sometimes despair of the use of human foresight, from the manner in which affairs of state are conducted. At Vienna, the march of these events was foreseen from the very moment when Maria Leszcynska got away from a convent at Innsbruck, in order to be married to the king of France, and every step in this direction was watched, and referred to it; and, notwithstanding, the accomplishment of these designs was not prevented, but the very things were done which played into the hands of the enemy.

Austria was as little armed against France, as Poland was against Russia. Nevertheless, neither one nor the other hesitated to take up the gauntlet which had been thrown down. Poland elected Stanislaus; Austria excluded him.

But should not one have thought that Austria, when seeing herself in this manner threatened with a war on the western frontiers, would now at least remember the friend whose alliance had already been found of immense advantage, and towards whom she had contracted obligations which did not depend upon these affairs,—in one word, that she would try to attach to herself anew the king of Prussia, in order to defend, in conjunction with him, the German, as well as her own cause.

She followed a line of conduct which was almost more inexplicable than the first.

The king felt offended and estranged, owing to the

Polish affairs; but, for all that, he would, under any circumstances, have grudged to the French a victory on the Rhine; and that they should conquer Lorraine was entirely foreign to his policy. He, for his part, was quite content that that country should one day be annexed to Austria, provided that the Prussian claim to Berg should likewise be carried into effect.

Although offended, he nevertheless, at the outbreak of the war, spontaneously made advances to the court of Vienna. He offered to the emperor to join in it with all his forces; to appear, as early as November 1733, with from thirty to forty thousand men on the Lower Rhine; and either to unite with the troops of the emperor and of the empire, or also make head in any direction wheresoever danger might threaten. He asked nothing in return but what had already been promised to him, and what according to all human appearances he must get, the duchy of Berg only, together with Dusseldorf, and under the condition of securing it without delay by previously taking possession of it. I cannot find that he entertained any other design. At the court of Vienna they could not possibly have had their eyes shut to the advantage which an auxiliary force like the one offered could have afforded; but they did not, perhaps, duly appreciate it, and, above all, they felt an unconquerable repugnance to see this vigorously growing military power, which was now no longer to be kept down in a subordinate position, appearing side by side with Austria. The king received from Vienna an answer

like the one which shortly before arrived from Dresden, in terms of the most friendly understanding, out evasive and negative.* The emperor would be satisfied if Prussia sent the ten thousand men stipulated in the treaty of alliance into the field; in return for which he once more assured the king, in the most solemn manner, that he would do his best to get Berg for him, as soon as it fell vacant. Frederic William was surprised and astonished. "Now just see," he says, in one of his letters, "how well advised his imperial majesty is! He fares in the French affair exactly as he did in the Polish one. Let the French now play the masters. I have nothing to do with it. But let the emperor also look out for another ally, who will risk everything for him, as I would have done."

It was a painful moment for king Frederic William, in which he was almost shaken in the very centre of his political ideas. He had done everything to raise a strong army, from which he promised himself consideration and influence in Europe. And now, on the first occasion when he offered his services to an

* But whilst Seckendorf writes on the 1st of September, "Your royal majesty cannot march the whole of your forces before the beginning of November, the difficulty in which the emperor is now involved is considered so great and urgent, that one is obliged to intreat your royal majesty once more for the 10,000 auxiliaries promised in the treaty of alliance," the king answered, Sept. 3, that he regretted very much that his offer to appear on the Rhine, as soon as ever peace was broken, with forty-one battalions and ninety-seven troops, should be taken differently from what he had meant it. If his troops would remain throughout the winter at the Lower Rhine, the French schemes would be vastly put out.

ally who was in pressing need of it, without asking very considerable services in return, he was repulsed. Indeed he once said, that it would be better not to have the army at all. If he would content himself with keeping ten thousand men, he would need no contribution; his country would then prosper much more, and become one of the richest in the world. It almost appeared to him, that his power was, after all, not of such importance as he had believed.

We may say that he was only not yet powerful enough! His army excited jealousy, without commanding absolute respect. It was very well known that his ideas were still confined within the horizon of a member of the empire, however he might sometimes try to rise above it. Although repulsed by Austria and Prussia, and having the old offence from England still rankling in his breast, he was not yet in the condition, nor even in the temper and disposition, to incline towards France, unless he was driven to it by the last necessity.

He was offended, and had arms; but there was no need to fear him.

The imperial court insisted on it, that the king of Prussia was not to be treated as an ally, and as an equal, by Austria, but as a member of the empire.

This was, on the whole, the most ruinous feature of the old system of the empire for the power of the German nation, that the latter could only spring from the independent energies of the greater territories; but that as soon as one of these raised its head, a

jealousy against it arose, and must have arisen, in the chief of the empire, which formerly caused the oppression, and now, as this could no more be thought of, the keeping back of these to be desirable, even in such urgent cases as the present.

Notwithstanding all this, the conduct of the imperial court would be quite unaccountable, if it had not thought itself sure of other allies. It reckoned with certainty on the assistance of the maritime powers; it seemed impossible to it that the latter, after having so often drawn the sword for the balance of Europe, should not defend it also in the imminent danger in which it now was placed.

As to England, king George II, for his own part, would have been very much inclined to restore the position of the old alliance, at a moment when Austria was still doubting and wavering. His ambassador gave a declaration on the subject, from which everything might be hoped. But the nation, the parliament, and especially the merchants of the kingdom, were of a different opinion. They had not forgotten what opposition Charles VI had made, some time before, to their trade. Judging of things at once from their results, they had found out that it was no gain to English commerce that Naples and Sicily were governed from Vienna.*

* The Prussian resident, Borck, was told in 1734, that it did not matter to the English nation who was duke at Milan; but that it was much better for the trade of England that Naples and Sicily should return to Spain, since the imperial court had spoiled the market for the English in those countries.

Besides all this, the prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who pursued a thoroughly peaceful system, and kept always on good terms with France, was not disposed to throw himself into the difficulties which his enemies might wish for him. He declared that he could do nothing without Holland.

But as to Holland, it was evident that it would do nothing at all. This is one of the clearest proofs of how much it benefited Fleury, that he founded his attack against the extent of the imperial countries, as it was settled by the treaties of peace, on some other pretext for war. The Dutch republic warned the emperor, before the affairs were yet submitted to its decision, not to meddle with Polish concerns, even if he had a right to do so; as, in their treaties with him, no article was to be found by which they would be obliged to send him assistance in such a case. To this they also firmly adhered when the war broke out.*

In a word, the two maritime powers, much as they were reckoned upon, would not stir. A free alliance with Prussia was rejected, and thus fate must have its course.

* Letter of the republic, July 9th, 1733. Quum non obscure appareat, quorum Polonorum mentes maxima ex parte se inclinent, acutissimo Cæ. Ræ. Mis. vestræ judicio perpendendum relinquimus, an tantum inter candidatos coronam ambiētes discrimen esse queat, ut posito, quod Mis. væ. jus sit vel alterius electioni intercedere, non satius foret, hanc causam leniter tractare, quam discrimen ad extrema perducere, nullo nos pacto vel fœdere obligatos. nos immiscere bello ex dissidiis de eligendo Poloniæ rege, absit omen, surrecturo.

The French occupied Lorraine and Bar, never to leave it any more. This conquest could be so little hindered at that moment, that in German history it was scarcely mentioned with one slight word. The public attention was riveted on other more pressing dangers.

There were a couple of these commanders still alive, who were the representatives of the glory of the times of Louis XIV, and clung to the ideas then paramount. As long as the French court pursued a different policy, they had been little employed and possessed no influence; but now they suddenly came forth again.

That Berwick, who, of all the generals, had perhaps most contributed to the establishing of Philip V in Spain, by successful manœuvres, as in the year 1706,—and by decisive battles, as by the victory of Almanza,—a man of natural heroism, and most happy even in his retirement at Fitz-James, where he occupied himself with gardening—now, in September, 1733, joined the army at Strasburg, crossed the Rhine, and, towards the end of October, occupied Kehl, in order to secure a free passage for the future.

Villars, who in 1672, already had followed king Louis XIV in his enterprise against Holland, who had once been on the point of leading the elector of Bavaria to Vienna, and who found fault with the later policy of his court, chiefly for having neglected in 1725 the opportunity of establishing a third house of Bourbon, to the lot of which the Austrian monarchy would have fallen, felt a happy youth again, when the old

ideas came back. With delight he took upon himself the chief command of the army in Italy, without considering the number of his years. "I believe," he says in his memoirs, "that I must not deprive my king, and the king of Spain, of my services, as long as there is a drop of blood in my veins."*

Already on the 3rd of November, 1733, Milan was taken possession of by the French-Sardinian army. In December, Villars reduced Pizzighetone, at that time a very strong place. In a moment he was master of the whole of Lombardy.

And since now the Austrian power had thus to withstand an advancing enemy on the Pô, as well as on the Rhine, the old plans of the Spanish court, in which the ambition of the Farneses was blended with that of the Bourbons, could be carried into execution. Don Carlos, who, in consequence of former agreements, had taken possession of Parma, at the head of a considerable army, which count Montemar had raised in Tuscany, started for the conquest of Naples. I should not like to repeat what has so often been said, that the aversion of the Neapolitans, and their wish of having a government of their own, had aided them in it. The impartial and well informed Foscarini asserts, on the contrary, that for centuries the inhabitants of the kingdom had not been more attached to any government than they were to that one; that

* These are the last words of his memoirs. Petitot, 71, 138. Excuses were made that they could not raise him to the rank of constable, which thought, therefore, recurs here once more.

Naples had, in the moment of danger, given undeniable proofs of fidelity; that Palermo, perhaps, only had fondly hailed the change, but even this merely after it had already been effected.* For they were, indeed, not prepared to resist a Spanish fleet, which commanded the sea and the islands, and the invading army which approached through the Papal dominions.

Already, in May, 1734, Don Carlos could assume the title of king of the two Sicilies. A few strong places held out for some time longer: on this side of the Straits, Gaëta and Capua; and on the other side, Syracuse, and Trapani; without, however, the taking possession of the country being thereby prevented.

This undertaking is to be considered as a continuation of the war of the Spanish succession. When the court of the Spanish Bourbons in the treaty of Vienna renounced its claims, it did so merely from the hope of reaching its ends in some other way. Since this had not come to pass, it had returned to its former policy. When Philip V, in 1731, sent his son to Italy, he girded him with the same sword which he himself had once worn, when Louis XIV dismissed him to Spain.

Yet these events can scarcely be called a war. It

* "Relatione, dopo perduto la patria (Milano) non si trovò alcuno di quei tanti, che militavano il servizio per cura di riavere le sue rendite . . . raro poi e memorando esempio diedero li Sri. Neapolitani, i quali accompagnarono la fuga del Vicerè con larghissime sovventione di soldo."

was the taking possession of provinces, neglected in a military point of view, and undefended. If the emperor wanted to maintain his patrimony, he was obliged to reconquer it. But from the very first, it did not appear as if he would be capable of doing it. It was not until the summer of the year 1734, that he brought two armies into the field, one in the district of Mantua, under the command of Mercy, the other under prince Eugene, on the Rhine, with the latter of which the troops of the empire were combined;* these, however, were most fit to prevent the enemy from advancing any farther, but by no means to strip him of his conquests.

Fortunately, we have not here the dismal task to fulfil of describing in detail the campaigns of 1734 and '35.

In the former, the king of Prussia, who had been preceded by his crown-prince, personally took a share. He sent the 10,000 men stipulated by the treaty of Berlin, from which he did not wish to depart one hair-breadth; and prince Eugene confessed that the Prussian troops were the best of all those which had taken the field. But to march against the French,

* The declaration of war had, as it were, been enforced from the empire by the emperor and Hanover. The king of Prussia had advised, "at first to set to work on the defensive, and previously to place oneself in an appropriate attitude before one declared war," and he complains that this had been imputed to him almost as a crime. On the part of the French it was asserted, that the declaration might have easily been prevented at the diet, since Austria and Saxony ought not to have voted in their own cause.

who, after having crossed the Rhine in two divisions, were besieging Philipsburg, to attack the entrenchments which they had drawn round themselves, with a skill for which they still bore the palm in Europe,* prince Eugene did not for one moment deem himself strong enough; this important fortress was lost before his eyes. He contented himself with protecting the advanced countries of the empire by well-chosen positions near Heilbronn and Bruchsal. When the king of Prussia had arrived, he was glad that the monarch, to whom he explained the reasons of his conduct, approved of what he had done. However impetuously the crown-prince might have wished for a battle, he was yet of opinion, that to the old general inactivity was an honour.

In the year 1735 things were better prepared. The troops of the emperor and of the empire—in which separate divisions of Prussians, Saxons, Hanoverians, and Hessians were to be distinguished—were joined at this time by the Russian auxiliary troops also, of which particular care was taken. The army might amount to 130,000 men, under their cautious leader prince Eugene, who, in the beginning of June, took the chief command, and pitched his camp, first near Bruchsal, and then near Heidelberg. It sufficed to keep the

* Foscari's relatione di 1736. "Di queste linee si ragionò molto degli imperiali, i quali ammiratori dell' eccellenza dell' opera et della prestezza di condurla conobbero non poter stare eglino a petto dei nemici nelle mechaniche della guerra ed accusavano l'abandono di simili arti nella militia tedesca."

French, whose numbers, though not equal, were yet not much inferior in the position which they had taken under the command of marshal de Coigny, near East-and-West Eiden, on the left bank of the Rhine. The two armies were each other out in manœuvres, such as the scientific theories of war might have suggested, but without any result. It was already an event, when a French partisan, La Croix, who had crossed over, fell in the Hünninger into the hands of the country militia, or when Prussian hussars brought back from a skirmish some prisoners and many wounds.*

However brave people might show themselves in this war, they could not retake the lost fortresses, and still less reconquer Lorraine. The French maintained all the advantages which they had gained at the beginning of the war.

Yet far more distant was the hope of a favourable change of affairs in Italy. The allies appeared in Lombardy with forces three times stronger than the emperor's; and the general to whom, after many changes, the chief command of the imperialists had been entrusted with something like confidence, count Königsegg, gained a certain degree of glory, merely by the fact that he brought the army back without a defeat into the territory of Trent.

* A Prussian huzzar is said to have got in such an affray twelve or fourteen wounds. The king said, "I am glad that my huzzars have done well; in such waters such fish are caught." He had before that written concerning his 10,000 men: "I hope that they will conduct themselves in such a manner as a Brandenburger is used to conduct himself." (June 25th.)

There are in the history of the world some great events without great achievements. However little literary satisfaction they afford to the narrator or the reader, yet they are well worthy of notice. One of them is the following:—

When we inquire into the causes of the disasters of Austria, they are found, as already hinted, not in the disaffection of the people, nor exclusively in the want of military preparation. Or, may we ask, could the Austrian troops have really defended Naples and Sicily against the Spanish-French squadron, unaided by a navy of their own? That the war took such a different turn from that of the Spanish succession, was merely owing to the altered position of the great powers. Without the help of England and Holland, and the co-operation of the German Protestants, Austria was not equal to an attack like that which it had to encounter. The issue depended less on feats of arms, than on the general state of affairs, and the distribution of power. If the forces involved in this struggle were weighed against each other, this must have been the result. And thus it will always happen, unless governments and people,—the former taking the lead with judgment, and the latter bravely fighting,—unite in a vigorous resistance. But this was at that time entirely out of the question.

And as France had enough on her hands in the West, and could not direct any proper attention to the East, it happened there, according to the same laws, that the balance inclined to the other side. The

partisans of Lesczynski did not impose upon themselves any strenuous exertions. They retreated, first from the capital, then, in the same manner, from place to place, and at last it must needs be a town originally German, though incorporated for centuries with the republic, Dantzic, already so often besieged in vain, which gave an asylum to the retiring king. The Russians had everywhere gotten the upper hand.

By this time, owing to the course of events, the king of Prussia found himself in a very disadvantageous position. And here it may be seen what was meant when the great elector made it his principle never to remain neutral, that is to say, not to allow of any decision of European affairs without throwing the weight of his forces into the scale.* King Frederic William had been placed in a condition of isolation; yet thus it happened that on both sides his sympathies were rather for the defeated party. On the Rhine, he was against the progress of the French, and opposed them, as a member of the empire. In Poland, he was against the establishment of the elector of Saxony, and the progress of the Russians on the mouths of the Vistula.

How gladly would he have prevented the siege of Dantzic, for which the Russians now prepared themselves. He caused representations to be made to the empress Anne, showing what irreparable loss would arise from it to his Prussian subjects, to which she answered, that the conduct of the people of Dantzic towards her had been so disrespectful, that she was

obliged to punish them. In the spring of 1734, general Münnich advanced to the siege. Frederick William had quietly to look on, whilst the town which had his most sincere sympathies was destroyed by the shells of the enemy, and its fields were laid waste on every side. The citizens, getting from the French no other support but ineffectual demonstrations, conceived the idea of annexing themselves to the king of Prussia. They actually asked him once, whether he would take them under his protection, if they laid down their privileges at the foot of his throne. But a step of this kind would have been contrary to the then existing order of things in Europe, and Frederic William could not decide upon it.

Offers were still continually made to him on both sides. With the consent of the magnates who surrounded him, king Stanislaus offered to make a cession of territory, by which East Russia and Pomerania would be placed in immediate connexion. The republic was afterwards to sanction and France to guarantee it. Hopes of a still greater gain were held forth by the empress Anne ; she offered to king Frederick William, if he declared for Saxony, the vaivode of Little Pomerania, together with the Starosties belonging to it, and the possession of Elbing besides, giving once more the hope of the ratification of the Löwenwold treaty, and would not the king now have come to a determination, and seized with a rash hand upon one or the other offer ? Things had gone so far, that either case was fraught with the utmost danger.

... with the French and their friends, and he was the first to win the emperor, which he did by showing him a picture of his father as a member of the council, and of his name in Berg. If he had not been necessary he might have soon fallen to the other French who now were in the ascendancy, and who in Russian provinces exposed to their influence. But there was one thing besides,—he was the only man of sincere confidence in any one, and he was the only man who was full of belief, and that was why he was married with me, and kept his name.

But the doctor is not too sure of him every
night. For when any body might attempt his
escape.

After Stanislaus' interview with the king, the most sublime adventures which Stanislaus has shared with his life pen.* had made the emperor and Catherine and the Prussian territory and arrived at Hapsburg, the court of Vienna made to the king of Prussia the proposal that he should give up the struggle to the sea. Frederic William had such a little to be a cruel one, and at this last it was. On the contrary, he once more advised the emperor to acknowledge Stanislaus even now, by which alone he would be able to save the provinces which they wanted to snatch away from him. He repeated what he had always said, that the

* *Œuvres du philosophe bienfaisant*

cause was not a just one. Why would they not allow him to be king of Poland? why were old friends, the maritime powers, and those who belonged to the empire, disregarded? Why was the friendship of Russia preferred to every other? No advantage would spring from it, as God was not with this cause. He writes with the hearty zeal of a prince of the empire, in whom, in spite of all his reprobation of the policy of the emperor, a sincere attachment for his person, involuntarily as it were, survives. He says that "he would pray to God to grant the emperor a right mind."

Soon afterwards, General Münnich, with whom already before Dantzic an unpleasant correspondence had been carried on, was reported to have given it as his opinion that, if the king could not in a friendly way be induced to remove Stanislaus and his companions from Königsberg, the Russian army was not too far off to pay him a visit in those parts, and to carry off Stanislaus by force. The king of Prussia took this threat very seriously. He sent a message to the ambassadors of the three courts,—Lichtenstein from Vienna, Brackel from Petersburg, and Ponikau from Dresden,—that if, what he did not believe, any idea of this kind were entertained, he would not only at once recall his troops from the Rhine, but he would also hold Saxony accountable for the loss he might suffer in Prussia. He did not let the matter rest until Münnich declared that he had never made use of such

If he had united with the French, and their friends, he would have broken off with the emperor, which he did not wish to do, on account of his duties as a member of the empire, and of his views on Berg. If he had joined the Russians, he might have soon fallen out with the French, who now were on the ascendency, and have his Rhenish provinces exposed to their invasion. But there was one thing besides,—he was no longer capable of sincere confidence in any one; he said that the world was full of deceit, and that “he fared best who united with no one, and kept himself aloof.”

For the present he only took care to refuse every demand with which any body might attempt his independence.

After Stanislaus Lesczynski, yet in the last moments of danger, amid the most toilsome adventures which he himself has related with an able pen,* had made his escape from Dantzic into the Prussian territory, and arrived at Königsberg, the court of Vienna made to the king of Prussia the proposal that he should give up the refugee to the czarina. Frederic William held such a device to be a cruel one, and at once cast it aside. On the contrary, he once more advised the emperor to acknowledge Stanislaus even now, by which alone he would be able to save the provinces which they wanted to snatch from him. He repeated what he had always

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expressions,* as he was well aware of the regard which he owed to the king of Prussia.

The king had indeed been requested to remove the French ambassador from Berlin, after the German empire had declared war against France. He replied that he was not merely a prince of the empire, but also a sovereign king, to whom it belonged to see foreign ambassadors at his court, whether this was at Königsberg, in Prussia, or in the march of Brandenburg.† But for all that, this ambassador, the Marquis de la Chetardie, had by no means a pleasant time of it at Berlin. He often asked in vain for an audience; disagreeable explanations were sometimes exchanged; nor was anything overlooked in him which was at all calculated to offend the feelings of independence in the king. One day, it was yet in June 1734, Chetardie went up to him on the parade at Potsdam, in order to tell him that the French government in some degree took umbrage at the crown-prince's joining the army, and that on the whole it must receive an explicit assurance, that the king would not send more

* Münnich, May 1-18, 1735: "I protest, upon my honour, that I have never used the language above-mentioned to a Polish gentleman, or to any one else, or that I have expressed myself in any manner like it." The king said that he would not put up with insult.

† Frederic William complained, in August 1735, that the residence of a French minister at Hanover was considered in a different light from the residence of a French minister at Berlin; and thus he would never allow himself to be spoken of as a subaltern king depending upon the imperial court. Sinzendorf, with the letter in his hand, only said, "Yes, you gentlemen at Berlin."

than those 10,000 men into the field, and in every other respect observe a strict neutrality, otherwise it would be obliged to take hostile measures against him. The king answered, that since his conduct in the Polish affair was of such great advantage to his French allies,—for Stanilaus was nothing to him,—he could not have expected that things of this sort would be said to his face; that he would never give the pledge demanded; that he would never separate himself from the empire, nor allow his hands to be bound; that if France wished to have a war with him, he was quite ready to have it. The ministers, to whom a similar intimation was made from France added, that if the prince went to the army, he was only trying to perfect himself in those acquirements which were most needful for him as the heir of the crown; that as to the king, he must reserve to himself the right of making full use of all his power, whether it became necessary on account of his claims to Juliers and Berg, or also because the French arms had entered too far into Germany. It is very surprising that the French, although war had been declared with them by the empire, did not deal any serious blow, either on the middle, or on the lower Rhine. This can only be explained by the regard which they had to Prussia. They were not to attack either Cologne, or Mentz, or Coblantz. The Prussian ministers acquainted them, that if they occupied any of those towns they could not tell how matters would go on between them. The states-general were un-

doubtedly of the same disposition. So far was there from being any thing like an understanding between Prussia and France. Concerning the affair of Berg there was once a negotiation between them. It was only with reluctance that the king entered upon it, and he made yet greater demands than the emperor had granted to him; and thus the two parties approached each other not one step nearer at that time.

The contact with foreign powers reminded Frederick William of the opposition in which he stood to them. Against the emperor, he pleaded that he was a sovereign prince; against France, that he had duties as a member of the empire. It was again a position of neutrality; not, however, like that of 1727, when Prussia hindered the collision of the powers. It was now to be maintained amidst the struggles already going on, in which she herself even partly shared. The motive was not a love of peace; but the king was forced to take an isolated position, because he wanted not to allow any influence to foreign schemes. He stuck to it with obstinacy, yet with dignity and manliness, ambitious but calm. We see the state, like a proud individual, in want of no one, and resting on its own might, whilst the others around are fighting about their own quarrels. Thus, (if we may compare dissimilar things,) a statesman may feel, in the midst of parliamentary contests, who, being sure of his cause, joins neither of the contending parties, and abides his time.

In the summer of the year 1735, the king himself

projected a plan for a general pacification, from which it may at least be seen what his ideas were aiming at. He wished that both Stanislaus and Augustus would retire, and content themselves with the royal title. The Poles should then proceed to a new election, from which all foreigners, German or French, must be excluded. From among themselves, however, they should be at liberty to elect whomsoever they pleased, without any one's meddling with it. Owing to the then position of affairs in the south of Europe, it also appeared to him that the emperor could not refuse to give up Naples and Sicily, yet that still Louis XV must not be allowed to make any new acquisition; on the contrary, he must agree to the marriage of the Duke of Lorraine with the heiress of Austria. If he should refuse, they were still strong enough in Germany to withstand him. He himself would resist him with all his might, and keep his army for four whole years in the field against him. Indeed, he stipulates also some conditions for his own advantage; yet they are very moderate. He no more thinks of Courland: he only repeats the demand which he had already made at the beginning of the war, that he might be allowed a part in the military occupation of Berg, and also to receive the preliminary homage of that duchy.

The objects which the king of Prussia had in view continued, therefore, to be these: a free Poland, under a Piast, without any foreign interference; the maintenance of Lorraine in its connexion with the

German empire ; and for himself, the carrying out of his hereditary claim. But to pave the way for these ideas, a more vigorous line of action would have been requisite, than was that for which he decided. The neutrality which the king observed might in itself be justifiable, and perhaps must also have once happened in the course of time ; but it could not lead to influence and real efficiency.

Whilst Frederic William,—convinced of what Stanislaus Lesczynski set forth in very eloquent pamphlets, that France would never give him up, and that on the whole she cared most sincerely for Poland,*—still entertained those ideas by which, on the other hand, the integrity of the German empire also would have been secured, negotiations of quite a different kind were carried on between the courts of Vienna and Versailles.

In the most profound secrecy, by means of an emigrant from Livonia, who had come to Paris to do some business for the count of Neuwied, and by means of the count himself, cardinal Fleury, in the spring of 1735, already had offers of peace made to Austria, on condition that Lorraine, if not immediately, at least at a later period, should fall to the lot of France ; that for the present Stanislaus should have it for the term of his natural life, and in return renounce the Polish throne ; that the duke of Lorraine was to be indemni-

* Marginal note of king Frederic William : "I am convinced that France will never make peace, but when Stanislaus shall remain king."

fied by the reversion of Tuscany. And so powerfully did the promised guarantee of the order of succession connected with this proposal act upon the imperial court, that, after some short hesitation, it entered upon it. The acts of hostility which occurred late in the summer of 1735, were merely that the powers who were not in the secret might not have the slightest suspicion of it; and in this, matters were really carried far beyond all conception. As late as the 20th of October, count Seckendorf, on an expedition against the Moselle, which at that time gained much praise, gave battle to the French; yet, on the 3rd of that month, already the preliminaries of peace between Austria and France had been settled on the basis proposed by Fleury.

How thunderstruck must the king of Prussia have been, when at last he heard of it! The very two things which he wanted to avoid,—the cession of Lorraine, and the acknowledgment of the Saxon king in Poland,—were confirmed in it. We shall presently have to speak of the reactions which this peace had upon him besides. Let us for the present say a few words on the disposition of the litigated territories which was adopted. It has remained the established one in subsequent times.

It was long before the Spanish court decided upon renouncing that Tuscany, which it already deemed to be its own; yet it was no slight advantage, that in exchange it kept Naples and Sicily. At length, the ambassador at the Lateran received the investiture

from the pope, and the old quarrel of the nations and families was finally set at rest in favour of the French. "In the blood the covenant" was, between *fleurs de lys*, the motto of the order of St. Januarius, which the new king founded at that period. In Tuscany, the duke of Lorraine, Francis Stephen, at the death of the last Medici, received homage without delay. It had been in vain to propose to him stipulations by which the municipal freedom of Florence would have been secured. He deemed himself bound to nothing, as the country passed to him, not by any agreement voluntary in any way, but merely in consequence of an European combination. In February 1739, the new grand duke took possession of the Palazzo Pitti.

In the meanwhile, the bailiffs of the five bailiwicks of Lorraine and Bar had taken before the chancellor and keeper of the seals of Stanislaus Lesczynski, the oath which also included the future incorporation of the duchy with the crown of France.

Stanislaus made Luneville his place of residence, and tried, by a court which, under the circumstances, was splendid and liberal, and imbued with the civilization of the age, to soothe the painful regrets with which the inhabitants parted from their native princes.

Then already the ties were broken, which had since times immemorial united the princely houses with the countries of their inheritance,—merely because the compromise of European quarrels made it necessary. The English court had been asked its opinion of these arrangements; and it answered, that it did not find

the balance of the European states to be disturbed by it. In the meanwhile, the opponent of Stanislaus, the elector of Saxony, took possession of the Polish throne. The diet for the purpose of pacification, which was held in the summer of 1736, by no means approved of the manner in which he had acquired it. It expressly decreed, that in future, the election should be proceeded with in no other place, and pronounced by nobody else, but where and by whom it had last been done in favour of Lesczynski; yet it acknowledged Augustus III. The two courts, that of Russia, to which these results were chiefly owing, and the Saxo-Polish, entered into the closest union. By their cooperation in the following year, the duchy of Courland passed into the hands of the first chamberlain of the empress of Russia. There is no proof that the French cared much whether the balance in the north was disturbed by it.

In the deliberations concerning these changes, ideas came to light which one would not have looked for in the eighteenth century.

In a memorial presented at Vienna, and, according to its title, issued from a congregation of cardinals, it is first of all put forth, that in raising the house of Saxony to the Polish throne, the principal object had been to make it strong enough to bring back in its own country "the lost sheep of Israel"; and it was stated that this was also a consideration, owing to which Stanislaus would submit to the renunciation which he was required to make, and Austria to the

indemnification proposed in his favour. The alliance between the house of Bourbon and that of Austria was at last to be brought about, by which the Romish creed might recover the ascendancy in the world. It was easier than ever with united forces to subdue the Turks, and Austria might thus regain what she had lost in other places. But with England also they might enter into the lists, if they only remained united; and they might wrest from her grasp Port Mahon at least, and Gibraltar, and perhaps once more change the dynasty. Least of all were the German Protestants to be feared. Their princes were so infatuated, that they would believe anything they were told. It would not cost the least trouble to ruin them.

The several courts of the Roman Catholic confession now entered into the closest union. The king of Sardinia, to whose lot two rich and conveniently situated provinces, Novarese and Tortonesé, had fallen in the peace, married the sister of the grand duke of Tuscany; and the new king of Naples, a daughter of the king of Poland. Between France and Austria, not so much a peace as an alliance, seemed to have been concluded for ever. Freed from the opposition, the emperor felt so much the less hesitation to unite his arms with those of Russia, hoping to make conquests which would indemnify him for the losses which he had sustained.

Of the motives alleged for the former policy of France, the principal one had been this, that she must not suffer the alliance of Russia, Poland, Saxony,

and Austria to exist. Now she acknowledged it, and joined it with the whole force of her partizans. The king of Prussia, who in every case took a personal view of things, could not abide Louis XV, who had abandoned his father-in-law, and made him, from a king of Poland, a duke of Bar. He would no more set his eyes upon the ambassador who had ever assured him of the contrary of what now happened.

The crown-prince, turning his thoughts to the future, was yet more amazed at Austria, which might have been well taught by the conduct of the French towards Stanislaus, how little it had to trust to the promises of that power concerning the guarantee. Others remarked, that this was the way of the world: and that the wisdom of the French consisted in not allowing themselves to be governed by their passions, and in pursuing only their own interest, according to which they would keep friendship to-day with one, and to-morrow with another.

At Berlin, however, the attention of the government was soon to be turned from general considerations to most pressing grievances of its own. When arms were again laid aside, the imperial court shewed to the Prussian one a coolness which the latter never expected.

King Frederic William had scrupulously fulfilled the obligations of his secret treaty; he had furnished his 10,000 men, and offered still more of them. It was no fault of his that no battle had been fought; nevertheless, he now met with reproaches, and one

thing especially was imputed to him as a crime,—that he had refused to take a share in the last expedition of General Seckendorf towards the Moselle.

In this the king had, however, other, and quite different, motives besides the political ones.

Although he had no suspicion that the preliminaries were so near their conclusion as really was the case, yet every one could then see that there was to be no more fighting in good earnest; and it was the general conviction, that Seckendorf, in this undertaking, wanted merely to procure for the army more spacious and convenient winter quarters beyond the Rhine. Now, there was in those days the old prince of Dessau present in that camp. He pointed out to the king that, if his troops were marched thither, they would, in that district which was entirely exhausted and therefore to be traversed in every direction, find the most dangerous opportunities of deserting into the neighbouring country of the enemy. On the strength of this advice it was, that the king refused his participation in the expedition. He did so the more innocently, as Seckendorf wrote to him that, in that case, other troops were ready at hand to supply the place of the Prussians.

This refusal was looked upon at Vienna as a sort of defection, and as a breach of the treaties.

Whilst the king, in order to avoid every suspicion, gave no audience to the French ambassador, and was anxiously careful to observe the most correct line of conduct, they accused him at Vienna of faithlessness

and apostasy. They did not understand a behaviour which opposed so much independent energy to the old friendship, and they rejected an ally who would not be theirs heart and soul. There is scarcely any doubt, but that reports which had sprung from misconception may have given rise to unpleasant apprehensions. And, as they were now in alliance with France, and the latter with the house of Neuburg, so that there was nothing more inconvenient and difficult than to fulfil the treaty of 1728, those grievances may have appeared a not unwelcome opportunity for getting rid of the duties which were imposed by it.

The differences began in the diplomatical conversations. The Prussian ambassador once mentioned, that the king had scrupulously fulfilled his obligations. The Aulic chancellor, count Sinzendorf, shrugging his shoulders, answered, that much might be said on that subject.

The king called upon the court of Vienna,—since now in the peace a general adjustment of the questions still litigated in Europe was to be expected,—to fulfil its promises in the affair of Juliers and Berg, stating that he would, on the decease of the present possessor, according to the precedents of the empire, immediately give orders for the civil occupation of the country. Sinzendorf said, that there was time enough to think about it. He would not enter upon anything more explicit; but his silence was significant enough.*

* In May 1730, the court of Vienna mentioned the juridical decision which belonged to it. The king answered, that the treaty

Slights already occurred, which Frederic William felt most deeply. The preliminaries of peace of October 3rd, 1735, were never communicated to the king. He had to gather them from the newspapers. He had ever shewn the warmest interest in the duke of Lorraine, and approved of his marriage with the eldest archduchess. He had himself proposed his election as king of the Romans, advising that it should not be delayed; and, in return for all this, now, when the duke concluded his marriage with Maria Theresa, not even a simple announcement of the event was made to him. This would, under any circumstances, have been a violation of the common civilities of life; but the king felt it as one of the most cutting insults which he had ever met with. He now took a retrospective view of all his political life. He repeated to himself, in what danger Austria had been at the period of the league of Hanover; what immense service he had done to her by his withdrawing from it; how he had then concluded an alliance with Austria; how he had not only himself granted the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction, but also carried it through in the empire; how he had broken, on that account, with his own relations, of the same blood, and of the same religion, and stirred up in his own house a quarrel which proceeded to the greatest lengths; and how he was now neglected and ill used, merely because he had not assisted in

of alliance of 1728 required no decision at all, but the promise given at that time must *casu existente* at once take effect. To this were replied the declarations above mentioned June 1736.

elevating, contrary to all his policy and every former agreement, the Saxon house to the Polish throne. A memorial is still extant,* which he himself once dictated, with reference to these events, from which it may be seen how completely the course of the great affairs was present to his mind—a rough draught, yet full of spirit and indignation, and rich in its contents.

He could not quite tell the court of Vienna all that he thought; but, in bitter words, he reminded it of many things, especially of the measures once adopted by the Hanoverian allies, from which the ruin of the house of Austria must have resulted. He said that he the king had, next to God, been the only one who had warded it off; that, on the other hand, before the death of the last king of Poland, he had always been assured that his heir in Saxony should never get the crown of that kingdom, as such an event would be pernicious to the house of Brandenburg; and that, nevertheless, this very thing had come to pass. At the breaking out of the war with France, he might indeed have doubted whether the *casus fœderis* had really happened, as the emperor appeared to many to have been the aggressor; yet he had not minded it, but had brought his 10,000 men into the field. Contrary to his inclination, and his better judgment—as it had also indeed turned out for his ruin—he had

* *Species facti*. “Je vous envoie,” the king writes on Feb. 27, “ma pièce que j’ai dictée mot à mot; elle est curieuse.” Grumbkow found it to be “entièrement conforme aux actes,” put it into shape, and sent it to Seckendorf.

allowed his vote for the declaration of war on the side of the empire to be wrested from him, not without exposing his Rhenish countries to a French invasion. He had offered to oppose the crown of France with all his might; but he had been repulsed hand and foot from ill-grounded jealousy. What frivolous things were those with which he was now reproached! It was indeed said, that the Westphalian circle, on account of the excesses committed by his troops, had furnished only 7,000 instead of 20,000 men; yet the whole circle had to furnish 12,000 men only, many of whom had bought their discharge. Or else, people would impute to him the ill-success of the last campaign, whilst the Russians, as well as his own troops, had continued with the main army. And now he got in the most trifling affairs nothing but ambiguous and vexatious answers. He demanded the respect and regard which were due to him, and he was mocked by the offer of tall recruits. Already he had to fear that the emperor entered into the views of France in favour of the Palatine, with regard to Berg. As in the uncertainty of human life, to every one who pursues a definite object, there may be moments when all that he has done appears to him a failure; thus it now seemed, and not without reason, to the king of Prussia. His eyes were filling with tears, not only of vexation for personal slights, received in return for faithful attachment, but also of self-reproach,—as matters, if differently managed, must have taken a different turn. The most bitter feeling on earth is remorse, where

nothing can be amended. In such a mood, the glance of Frederic William fell on his son, and he uttered these prophetic words, "Here stands one who will one day revenge me."*

What very different things would the Germans have accomplished in Italy, on the Rhine, and in Poland, had the two powers kept together!

It may be easily understood, that the imperial court felt greater sympathies for its Roman Catholic neighbours, than for a power like the Brandenburg-Prussian one, so independent, aspiring, ambitious, and powerful in arms;—but such was the destiny of Germany. For without the reunion of the two, nothing more could be done by the empire. To shut one's eyes to it, was mistaking the results of the past, and the necessities of the future. The archducal house ought never to have given the preference to any other ally; for having done so, it had to pay very dearly indeed.

The disaffection which arose from it, and entered into all the political relations, is of moment for the history of the world. Its consequences will furnish the subject of our narrative.

* *Journal de Seckendorf*, 137, from the statements of Grumbkow. "Le roi est entré de la manière ignominieuse dont la cour impériale l'a traité; il veut être honoré et distingué, comme il croit l'avoir mérité, par sa conduite passée, qu'il cherche toujours de justifier; disant en montrant le prince royal : voilà quelqu'un qui me vengera un jour."

First of all, the attention of king Frederic William directed itself again exclusively to his hereditary claims. At the outbreak of the Turkish war, he offered to the court of Vienna a considerable loan, on no other condition but this, that the promises referring to them, which were contained in the treaty of 1728, should be renewed to him. But, at Vienna, they were now afraid, lest, by renewing those obligations, they might get into other unpleasant relations with France; as to the Turks, they thought that they might have done with them within a few months, even without the Prussian money. And thus, even this offer was declined.

The king saw well, that in this manner he would never succeed in realizing his claim, and he was therefore obliged to think of other expedients.

It did not seem to him impossible, without further interference, to conclude a compromise with the elector palatine; and the offers were not trifling which he made to him,—1,200,000 dollars for the elector himself, and for each of his princesses a dowry of 50,000 dollars, as soon as he got possession of Berg. But it was soon evident that he would not be able to carry this point. The ministers of the elector palatine were either in the interest of the emperor, or of France, and they hastened to apprise the courts of Vienna and Versailles of these proposals, about which they were to deliberate alone. There was, however, one among them who would have wished independently to form a resolution, Grevenbroich. It was he, indeed, who had given rise to those transactions; but he was

far from enjoying the influence which would have been requisite to bring them to an issue. The old elector was too zealous a Roman Catholic, ever to decide upon yielding those provinces to a Protestant prince. He said, that he would rather lose them by force, as then he would not have anything to answer for.

King Frederic William did not fail to apply also to those European powers who had been least involved in these affairs, England and Holland; but to no purpose. George II declared that, if ever he had taken upon himself an obligation in this respect, it was cancelled by the breach of the Hanoverian treaty.

With Holland, tedious and prolix negotiations were carried on at the Hague, and once, at least, mutual approach seemed to take place. The king of Prussia declared, that he would content himself with a provisional arrangement, until the affair should be settled, so that the fortresses would be occupied by neutral troops, and the country governed by native and Prussian functionaries at the same time. He called this a *status quietus*. But as the republic rejected his proposal, and insisted upon the maintenance of a *status quo*, he too fell back upon his original claim, of immediately taking possession in the event of a vacancy.

But instead of effecting anything, he was doomed, on the contrary, to live to see a general apprehension and excitement arrayed against him.

The European powers thought that the peace in the interior of Europe from henceforth rested everywhere

on a sufficiently firm groundwork; that no other question remained to be solved but that of Juliers and Berg; and they were of opinion, that they ought to exert themselves not to allow the peace to be disturbed by it.

Austria, France, England, and Holland, united, towards the end of the year 1737, in making proposals to the two litigating princes, which, owing to the weight of their joint authority, seemed not easy to be rejected.

Two different memorials were composed, one addressed to Prussia, and the other to the Palatine princes.*

In the former, which was presented February 10, 1738, it is stated that, in order to obviate the dangerous dissensions which the decease of the elector palatine threatened to cause, a common mediation for a compromise was offered. The king, however, was requested to give the promise that, whilst the negotiations were pending, he would make no attempts to take possession of the country,—a demand which, of itself, was at variance with the wishes which he had so often expressed. But they would not be contented even with this.

The favour of the powers was evidently inclining towards the palatine house. In the other memorial,

* On Feb. 10, 1738, the four ambassadors,—the imperial, baron Von Demerath; the Dutch, Von Ginckel; the French, M. de la Chétardie; and the English resident, Guy Dickens,—made their appearance, and presented their memorials, all of the same contents.

originally destined for the elector palatine, which was likewise presented to the king of Prussia, it was openly stated, that the provisional possession of the litigated territories would be given to the prince of Sulzbach. The clause was indeed added, that this should not be for his benefit; yet there had been of late many instances in which possession, once taken, was never given up. Frederic William considered this to be an immense advantage, and had always claimed it for himself. What he had most eagerly desired, and caused most carefully to be guaranteed to him, was now adjudged to his rival.

Here there was no question of any high imperial court or chamber for the decision of princely litigations; the emperor, himself, did not act in his quality of chief of the empire; but the influential West European powers, which had for some time decided in all the differences which happened to arise, now also took upon themselves to end that of Juliers and Berg, just as they thought proper. How much had their decisions been once complained of in Spain, and only latterly in Tuscany! It was now to be seen, whether the king of Prussia would submit to such an arrangement in affairs which concerned himself. We have remarked with what vehemence he separated himself from each power singly, whenever they wanted to exercise upon him a one-sided influence. But he had now to go through all the different modifications of these demands; and what they had not obtained from him individually, they now required of him collectively. What

we know of Frederic William, leaves us no doubt that this was just as annoying to him. It could never enter into his head to allow a right, which, as he thought, involved the most important interests of his house and country, to be decided by others, according to their own views, without his opinion being so much as asked. Otherwise, he with his Prussia would, after all, have consented to be a subordinate power, which appeared to him to be the height of disgrace.

Grumbkow, who, by the devotedness which he had once shewn to Austria, had not lost the king's confidence, and who, feeling how unavoidable it was that the Prussian policy should take an opposite direction, had gone into the same course (he would sometimes inveigh the most bitterly against Austria), was, at this moment, once more consulted. His advice was to assume a calm, but proud, attitude;* to wait and see what the powers would do; and then to make a separate treaty with the one or the other. This seemed to the king, also, to be the best plan.

The first idea was rather not to reply at all to the memorials presented. Yet, as this might have appeared as an insult, and made a bad impression on the public at large, an answer was given, but one which confined itself to vague generalities, and said as little as possible.

The real answer might be seen in the preparations which were made in the army, to get in readiness for

* *Conduite soutenue, sans se baisser ni se hausser, et pousser le temps avec l'épaulé.*

the field as soon as there should be occasion for it. Frederic William intended, on the decease of the elector, immediately to cause civil possession to be taken, just as had been done in the year 1709. If he should be molested in it, the whole of his army was to advance thither. For the eastern regiments, he appointed Halberstadt; and for the western, Duisburg, as places of rendezvous. To gain everything, he would risk to lose everything; and he said, "that it was an affair of interest, yet still more of honour, and that it was better to lose everything, and to have honour, than to abound, and be in disgrace." It was evident after a short time that the powers were by no means as unanimous as they appeared to be. Holland and England signified, that they had never cared in earnest to procure the provisional possession for the prince of Sulzbach; that when they had acceded to that proposition, they had done it only with the reservation, that they would enter into further negotiations, if it should be rejected; and on this supposition, they were not averse to return to the plan of a provisional government. On this, an angry correspondence arose between the maritime powers, on one side, and France and Austria on the other.

Nevertheless, they could not have hoped in Berlin to come to any understanding with the former. The coolness with the English court was still continuing, as was shewn by a thousand petty diplomatic or personal incidents. The two princes felt mutually offended, and shunned each other.

On the other hand, the breach between Frederic William and Austria widened every day. He was told that the proposal which was so obnoxious to him originated with the emperor himself; and the explanation which Bartenstein gave about it, that "the possession ought not to be yielded to the prince personally, but in the name of the elector, who was, in that case, to be supposed as still living," could not set him at rest. It was just as if they wanted to make him believe white was black, and black was white. He saw this only, that he was to come off with empty hands, and that the secret treaty was not to be adhered to. Not even to the proposal of occupying the fortresses with neutral troops would they listen at Vienna. They said, that on this very point war might break out; it would not be possible to draw the Palatine troops, which garrisoned those places, by friendly means out of them; and that, if they attempted to draw them out by force, they would have to fight with France. The king asked, whether it seemed right to the emperor, that France should be the arbitress of Germany. But in the general conjuncture of affairs, this remark made no more impression. On the contrary, in the beginning of the year 1739, the emperor entered into a new treaty with France, by which the provisional possession was to be granted to the prince of Sulzbach for two years, and within that time no other unauthorized taking possession was to be permitted. Either power was to support the other in the maintenance of this agreement.

How entirely at variance was this with those expectations, which had been excited by Seckendorf's negotiations, and raised into political validity by the secret treaty of 1728. The opposition shewed itself already in a very marked manner. The king was determined upon turning the power of his arms against any interference with his taking possession. The emperor united with the French not to allow such a taking possession, and endeavoured beforehand to secure himself against the possible losses of a war.

"It almost seems," the king exclaims, "as if at Vienna truth and faith has been quite forgotten, at least as far as regards ourselves. They want, according to the precepts of Machiavel, not to be angry by halves, but entirely. Yet the time may come when the emperor will repent of having so sorely offended his best friend, and sacrificed him to others."

It was not otherwise. Towards the end of his days, he was obliged once more to attempt a new turn of policy. Repulsed on all sides, threatened by the emperor with French arms, he determined—for no other expedient was left to him—himself to apply to France.

And what in the relations apparently so close between France and Austria could scarcely have been expected, to the very first overtures of Prussia the cardinal minister answered with the greatest readiness to meet her views. Whilst apparently he was still taking steps to draw the maritime powers into his agreement with Austria, he had already entered into

quite opposite negotiations. This was the system of the times, and especially of the cardinal, who loved, while just seeming to pursue the adopted policy, in the meantime to work his way through subterraneous passages towards a different end, where he then, when the hour had arrived, suddenly came out with unexpected means. In this manner he had snatched Lorraine and the two Sicilies from the house of Austria, and become the most powerful man in Europe. Whilst he now engaged with Prussia, he made inviolable secrecy the first condition. In order so much the better to keep it, the negotiations were carried on neither at Versailles nor at Berlin, but at the Hague, by means of the ministers of the two powers there resident, Fénélon and Luiscius.

Yet it could not be presumed that Fleury would have yielded to the king the entire duchy of Berg. He was too closely united with the Palatine house, and owed too much regard to the Roman Catholic world, which considered Düsseldorf as a frontier fortress against the Protestants, and declared the districts of Berg, beyond the Agger, to be indispensable to the connection of the Roman Catholic countries with each other. He said, that if he gave up the one or the others, he should certainly be stoned to death. Besides which, he did not deem it expedient to allow yet further tracts on the borders of the Rhine to fall into the hands of such a strong German power. After a long resistance, the Prussian ministers were obliged to agree to curtailments which he proposed; yet they got some

concessions, when the proportion of country was to be defined* which was to be reserved along the river for the Palatine prince, in return for which they promised to pay to the latter half a million of dollars.

In Berlin, the question was once more mooted, whether it would not be better to maintain the claims undiminished, and to wait for more favourable circumstances. Yet the king said, that it was not the way of the world that one should attain one's ends at the very first; that if his grandfather had contented himself with that part of Pomerania which had been offered to him, the whole would long since have been acquired. He accepted the treaty as it was settled, March 1739, at the Hague. On the 22nd of May, in the same year, the ratifications were likewise exchanged there with the utmost secrecy.

And already the way was being made for a still closer alliance. The quarrel between England and Spain broke out anew. There was much said just then about the election of a future emperor. From both these reasons, it would have been infinitely desirable for the French to have Prussia for an ally. In January 1740, they set forth the plan of a mutual defensive alliance to be concluded for fifteen years. King Frederic William rejected this so much the less,

* The line upon which they agreed—beginning half a league from Angerort, winding towards the bridge of Troisdorf, but before reaching it, turning off on the heights of Westhofen towards the junction of the Agger with the Sieg—cut out a much larger tract in favour of Prussia than had been at first intended.

as he had other claims besides those on Berg,—for instance, those to East Friesland, for the carrying out of which he could neither expect support from England, nor, as matters then stood, from the emperor, but only from France. Plans and counterplans were exchanged on the subject, without its being brought to a conclusion. Yet many further hopes were opened already. Cardinal Fleury said, that Prussia, on account of the good order of her finances, and the great number of excellent troops which she kept, deserved to play a prominent part in Europe, and France would gladly contribute to it.

Nobody will believe that the old zealously patriotic king could have been gratified by this alliance. It might have been a satisfaction to him that he was not quite without a stronghold in the world; however, the connexion had been imposed upon him like a necessity of fate, in consequence of the failure of all his former plans. Yet, whilst he entered upon it, he formed the ties of relations which were in after times to bring about an entire change of policy. Before we approach them, let us turn our attention to the domestic groundwork on which the possibility of any further development of the foreign power of Prussia rested.

ARMY AND STATE.

An aggregate of German provinces, which, altogether, scarcely contained two millions and a-half of inhabitants, and which were not even connected with each other;—facing the kingdom of France, which

reached from the Pyrenees to the Upper Rhine, and from the Mediterranean to the Ocean; bordering upon colossal Russia and inexhaustible Austria; having by its side England, the mistress of the sea,—had of itself but little importance. What procured for the Prussian state a certain rank among those powers, and consideration in the world, was its army alone. It was at that time calculated, that France was keeping up a land force of 160,000 men; Russia, one of 130,000 regular troops; yet, in the latter country, the muster-rolls were far from being complete, and in the former, a great part of the army was taken up by garrisons in the numerous fortresses. The Austrian army was estimated at 80,000 to 100,000 men, who were, however, not quite to be reckoned upon as to their fitness for active service, and were scattered in all the provinces. What Frederic William I has done for the position of Prussia in this competition of military power, may at once be appreciated, when we remark, that he increased the army from 38,000 men, which number made it of about equal rank with that of Sardinia or Saxo-Poland, to upwards of 80,000. We have the exact calculation of a military functionary from the first years of the following reign, according to which, Frederic William, on his accession, found an army of 38,459 men, and raised it, still in his first year, to the number of 44,792. In the year 1719, the army amounted already to 53,999; in the year 1729, to 69,892; in the year 1739, to 82,352, or with the inferior staff, 83,486. The king paid very

nearly equal regard to the increase of the several arms. The cavalry was augmented, during his reign, by more than half, and the artillery in a still greater ratio.* In his army there was no discrepancy between the muster-rolls and the real strength. The duty in the fortresses did not take up a great number, considering its size. If we adopt the lowest estimate, 72,000 men were ready every moment, or at least on the shortest notice, to take the field.

From the mere proportion of numbers, it is evident that it was impossible to raise a standing army of this strength in the Brandenburg-Prussian countries, without turning off from every other occupation the forces indispensable for it. An extraordinary effort was required already, only to raise half of the men required from natives. For some time the system was fluctuating between compulsory and voluntary service, recruiting, and conscription. The arbitrary acts of the officers, the rivalry and mutual encroachments of the regiments, gave rise to innumerable irregularities and grievances. In order to remedy these defects, Frederic William developed more systematically an older regulation, by which to each regiment a particular district was assigned for its recruiting. The hearths of the country were, according to their number, distributed by cantons among the regiments and

* Report of Massow to Frederic II, in the year 1748. If mistakes should have crept into the calculations with regard to the several additions, which is not impossible, the proportion is nevertheless correct.

companies, in order to draw from them the requisite number of men, in as far as they were not protected by special exemptions, or indispensable for the different trades, and for agriculture. Neither householders, nor eldest sons and heirs were taken; councillors were present at the enlistments, in order to prevent any encroachments being made upon the pursuits of peace. The greater part of the levy, which was immediately brought into contact with the commanders, was formed of the younger sons of the peasantry. In the geographical descriptions of the Brandenburg countries, it is particularly noticed, that the country people are healthy, strong, and industrious, seasoned against changes of weather, and able to do most excellent service in war. The maxim of old Cato was found to be true, that the peasantry furnished the bravest warriors.

Nearly half of the army was, however, levied and kept up by recruiting. What caused the greatest difficulty, was the predilection for tall, huge men, who, from all parts of Europe,—Sweden, Ireland, the Ukraine, and the Austrian-Turkish border countries of Lower Hungary, proving particularly productive,—were gathered at an expense which was really astonishing, considering the king's usual frugality, and not without violence and stratagem, in the German empire, where the princes would not allow it. But there were some districts besides, since he, in his capacity of elector, had the right of recruiting in the imperial towns, and their territories, and men were

not wanting in Germany who had a taste for the profession of arms, and were glad to enlist in a service in which they were well paid and well kept. By this means, there was a strong universal German element infused into the army; the combination of natives with those recruited in other countries excited between them a sort of rivalry and mutual self-control, until at last they amalgamated in the strict school of military training. It would be beyond our limits if we attempted to develope its nature, and to describe how those two great drill-masters, prince Leopold of Anhalt on his little meadow at Halle, and the king himself in his Spartan Potsdam, the former laid down the first groundwork, and the latter added the finishing practice. For this was the chief use of the regiment of tall people at Potsdam, to make a trial of every change that seemed necessary, and to carry it to practical perfection.* The chief point was to keep step, and to fire quickly; as the king once expressed it, "to load quickly, to keep close order, to aim well, to look steadily into the fire, all in the most profound silence." Against those deep columns in which formerly the Spanish order of battle advanced, the armies opposing them showed a broad front, less exposed to the destructive fire of the artillery, and more effective by presenting a longer line of musketry; and whereas musket and pike were formerly seen side by side,

* The other regiments often sent officers to Potsdam, in order to learn by ocular view what was not to be gathered from their written instructions.

gun and bayonet now formed a combination of both. Very useful proved the iron ramrod, by the stronger stroke of which the cartridge was at once rammed fast, whilst before that several moves were necessary. It was for this reason also that tall men were preferred, because they were deemed to be naturally more fit for this sort of manual exercise. The whole infantry of the Prussian army could draw up in four lines, the first and last of which consisted of the tallest and strongest, the two middle ones of somewhat smaller, but still tall and strong men. In their colours the eagle soaring upwards to the sun was seen. They made a most warlike and martially terrible appearance. "Friend and foe," says prince Leopold in one of his letters, "admire your majesty's infantry. The one looks upon it as a wonder of the world, and the others behold it with trembling." *

The leaders of these hosts, whose day's work it was to go through the exercises, and to practise them with recruits, were for the most part the native country nobles. In an enumeration of the Pomeranian nobility of the year 1724, the remark is added, that, with a few exceptions, it consisted of nothing but officers, who were still serving, or had served.†

* He remembers his grandfather, who had laid the foundation-stone of such an immortal work. "As I have had the honour to serve in it from my seventeenth year, and the little glory I have, I gained with your majesty's infantry."

† Grundling's Pomeranian atlas, part of the Brandenburg one, on the reverse of page 278.

One of the chief endeavours of Frederic William was now to form a thoroughly useful and active corps of officers.

How many complaints were raised, just at that time in the Austrian service, that the commissions in the army were not only purchased, but that they could even be sold again; that they were not considered as an honour, but as a property which might be disposed of; and that, even where this was not the case, the deserving and well-trying man had everywhere to give way to some high-born youngster.*

In the Prussian army also, it was formerly the general custom, that the vacancies of the company officers were filled up by the colonels, who, at their discretion, promoted ensigns to lieutenantcies, and lieutenants to captaincies. The appointment to the rank of field officers was reserved to the king; yet the colonels had the right of recommending even for these.

Frederic William now took all the appointments in his own hand, not only because he wanted to be everywhere master himself, but also because he deemed it important not to leave the first appointment, on which everything else depends, to chance, or to personal considerations, but to proceed with it according to his own judgment.

The young noblemen, who entered the regiment as lance corporals, formed the nurseries for his officers.

* According to Foscari's *Historia Arcana*, p. 213, a company was bought for 8,000, a majority for 20,000, and a colonelcy for 30,000 florins.

They were here obliged to pay the greatest attention in essential and unessential things, and every oversight was visited with the strictest punishment, even castigation. Whenever the king came to the regiment, he asked after their character, and had them presented to him. And this was to continue until the happy day arrived when the young man was promoted to be ensign, and received the badge of an officer, which he must never allow to be insulted, and which made him in a certain sense inviolable.

The king would appoint such only as well understood their exercise, committed no excesses, were tolerable managers, and also were smart-looking. Upon these conditions their further promotion depended. The reports of conduct, made every year, stated how every one had conducted himself with regard to religion, the management of his own affairs, and the service, and whether he had any talent or not. As to the merits of the commanders themselves, the condition of the regiments at the yearly inspection by the king himself, gave evidence.

It may seem somewhat petty, that, for instance, with regard to the uniform, everything, down to the most trifling detail, was regulated,—how large the ruffles, and how broad the cravat was to be; how many buttons the spatterdashes were to have; and how low the ribbon of the queue was to hang. Yet besides the uniformity so desirable for the eye, there was the additional reason, that in the army every other distinction was to cease, and the rank in the

once more explained, how little advantage the lord had from his fiefs, as even escheats did not profit him anything, since he was obliged to regrant the estates, his hands being often tied in it, besides, by very stringent laws. And how onerous, notwithstanding, the feudal connexion was to the landowners! They were worried with fees, especially at the investiture, and it was impossible to make the least disposition without the consent of the feudal chancery, which must be dearly paid for it. Minors were in constant dread of committing a fault, and being fined for it, and what a loss was it for widows and orphan daughters, who were expelled from their homes, and had nothing to live upon! If all this were done away with, and the owners left full powers over their estates, the cultivation of them would in a few years be seen to improve, and their value to increase. The domestic wealth of the country would be substantially augmented.

It was, besides, at variance with the practical sense of Frederic William, who cared exclusively for the useful, to keep up obsolete rights which only proved oppressive. But what gained him over to the proposition, was the demonstration of the possibility of imposing upon the feudal estates a yearly payment, the total amount of which would be no inconsiderable addition to his military chest. As, at the same time, some noblemen, to whom he gave an intimation of the project, approved of it, he declared himself at once ready, on the payment of a fixed compensation, to change all the fiefs into allodial tenures. He would

not only give up his right of escheat, but grant to the vassals the liberty of alienating, or mortgaging their estates, as they pleased.

Yet he was not in such a situation that he could have simply ordered an innovation to be carried out, which so deeply affected private rights. He was obliged to enter into discussions with the estates of the different provinces, and not the least remarkable feature in the affair is the manner in which this was done.

As early as the year 1713, the deputies of the prelates, counts, lords, the equestrian body, and the towns from both sides of the Oder and the Elbe, had assembled. And their claims appeared even important when we see that they called to mind the old decrees of 1572, 1602, 1611, 1614, 1615, and especially the great recess of 1653, and moved for the confirmation of the rights granted them.

This request was not, however, complied with. Frederic William replied, that he must first inform himself how far these recesses were applicable to the present altered circumstances. The estates allowed, although in expressions in which they tried to insist upon their privileges, that this was a most enlightened sentiment; and being directed more explicitly to state what they wanted, they only set forth some isolated points relative to fiefs, and the ecclesiastical patronage. Their demands did not in any way partake of a political nature, nor could it have been so, as the quarrel between the equestrian body and the towns

continued unabated, and the two parties could not agree, even in the most trifling affairs.*

The monarchy was too strong for the nobles to meddle with the general management of affairs. Their sphere of action was limited to the circle of their own particular rights.

But even in this position of affairs, the nobles were to be negotiated with concerning the present scheme of the king. At the first intimation of it, the apprehension arose that he wanted to abolish the ancient privileges and dignity of the nobles; for, said they, how were families to keep up their influence, if they had the free disposal of their estates? All the collective claims of the collateral members would be done away with; it appeared as if the nobles were to be made a taxable body, and put on the same footing with citizens and peasants. If the nobles had at once been called together, and the scheme laid before them in its first rough draught, they would infallibly have rejected it.

But there was then a method pursued adapted to the simplicity and the familiarity of the times,—of making the deliberations begin in the provincial com-

* Thus, for instance, they moved at that time for the introduction of an uniform measure and weight, and the king directed them to lay a plan before him. But they could not agree whether the Brandenburg or the Berlin measure was to be the standard. The noblemen preferred the former, and the citizens the latter. They were therefore obliged to leave the matter to the king, who then sided with the citizens.

mittees of the nobles, where the matter was rather the subject of conversation than of real debate.

Of the provincial committees which were then held, the most remarkable, without doubt, was that of the Havelland. The author of the project, Katsch, took the lead in it, and he succeeded in convincing those present of the advantage which must result to them from the change. At the first assembly of the deputies of the provinces in Berlin, the government, in the bosom of which various objections had likewise been raised, made it its first care to set aside the class-apprehensions which afforded the greatest resistance.*

The king acknowledged the claims of the collateral members; limited the succession of the daughters to the extinction of the male line; confirmed the restrictions to which the alienations and mortgages were subject; and, on the whole, dropped everything which might have become injurious to the nobles as a class. They were chiefly his own rights which he gave up,—reliefs, fines, and escheats. For this, and as a compensation for the furnishing of horses, (to which, as it was stated, in the case of an armament of the neighbours, the nobles were bound by the law to keep themselves in readiness every moment,) he demanded a yearly payment (canon), which he at first laid down at fifty, and afterwards at forty dollars a horse. Katsch

* Its committee consisted of Ilgen, Grumbkow, Kraut, Creutz, and Katsch. The chief-marshal, Prinzen, made the weightiest objections.

had in the first ebullition of his zeal thought it possible to get sixty dollars.

On this the deputies went home to consult with their constituents in the provinces, and met twice more at Berlin in April and June 1717.

In April, a decided majority showed themselves ready to enter into the scheme. The first who were willing to side with the government were the deputies of the Middle March, and these were joined by those of the Ukermarch, and by the nobles of Priegnitz, who separated from those of the Old March, with whom they used to vote on all other occasions.

One difficulty was still caused by the amount of the canon. On the 24th of June it was adopted by the deputies of the three equestrian bodies just mentioned.*

The New March joined them, especially as the king promised to pay due regard to the poor. On the other hand, he too signed a bond by which the general privileges of the nobles were confirmed anew. Yet he did not allow anything to be wrested from him which would have been contrary to the notion of a state, and he warded off every untoward demand. He said that what he had given up were nullities, and what he had were realities; and that he wished that he could make such an exchange every day.

He calculated that the canon, although lowered in

* From the Priegnitz, the land-councillors Platen and Stille; from the Ukermarch, the director Wedel; from the Middle March, Bredow, Rohr, Platen, Wilmersdorf, Wulffen.

some places,—for instance in Pomerania,—to forty florins, would yet bring in from his countries belonging to the empire alone, from sixty to eighty thousand dollars,* from which he might establish two regiments; and he proposed everywhere to carry out the change of fiefs into allodial tenures in this particular form.

In the Old March next, where people did not deem themselves bound to acknowledge the majority of the states in the electoral March to be binding on the rest, he met with many difficulties. The objections of this province are ever after couched in bitter expressions. The king left them unanswered, but insisted upon his will being done. Some devoted land-councillors gained the merit of travelling from one signorial manor to another, and of obtaining, by their verbal representations, the consent of those who still held out. When the scheme had once been adopted in the Marches, the other provinces gradually followed.

It is remarkable that, at one time, the Aulic council took the part of the opposition. It asserted that the innovation was contrary to the original constitution of the German empire. Whereupon the king answered, that what he had done was for the improvement of his nobility, and had been effected with their consent. He hoped that nobody would try to prevent him from changing, if it could be done without

* Confer Riedel's *Magazine*, iii, 1, 33. From Prussia 15,000 dollars were expected to be raised by suitable arrangements.

inconvenience, old institutions which did no more suit the present time.

At all events he succeeded in accomplishing a work of the greatest importance; of making the resources of the nobility serviceable for the public object of arming the country, without crushing the class.

The rights of the states, however little they otherwise were talked of, did not prove inefficacious, as they reduced the views of the government, which originally went much further, to things as they were practicable at that time.

In a much less degree did the towns oppose a will of their own. And yet it could not be said, that the guidance to which they gave themselves up had been injurious to them. To the nobility, to judge from its memorials, they appeared even favoured; and indeed the king made it one of his principal cares, to raise them again, especially with regard to their trade.

Now the general conviction in Germany, towards the end of the seventeenth, and the beginning of the eighteenth century, agreed in this, that the German industry, which had already sunk to so low an ebb, must be entirely ruined, unless the most vigorous measures were adopted. In the works which were most extensively read, complaints occur, that by the preponderance of French manufactures, the inmost power of vitality, that of production, was drawn away from the German nation, the blood sucked from its veins. The heroic remedy was once advised, as no competition with the foreigner was possible, at once

to begin with prohibition, and then to make the establishment of home industry follow. For where there was no rigour there was no vigour.*

In the March of Brandenburg, the most melancholy proofs of the decline of German industry were far more seen in the preponderance of the English, than even of the French one. The broad cloths of the Priegnitz and of the Old March, which had until now been dyed at Hamburg, and then exported to the north,—no inconsiderable article of trade for Brandenburg,—found no more sale there, because their quality could no longer satisfy the higher demands of the buyers.† How should they have stood the competition of the English in foreign markets, while they succumbed to it at home!

Frederic I had done much for industry, for those branches of it especially of which the court stood in need. But the uncertain condition of the court itself, and the administration, wavering between leasing and farming, in short, between different principles, had prevented every real improvement, and a number of

* “Ubi non est rigor, non est vigor.”—Hornegk’s *Austria above all the World, if She only wants to be so*, first edit. 1684; second, 1712, p. 95. “Others,” he said, “wished to introduce the home manufactures, in order afterwards to prohibit the foreign ones, but my advice is, to prohibit the foreign ones, and then to introduce the home ones.”

† König’s *Berlin*, iii, 357. In the year 1707, queen Anne had, by an act for the encouragement of the manufacture and the dying of woollen cloth, laid a heavy duty on the export of white woollen stuffs.

traders and artizans, who had been newly attracted into his dominions, had again been driven away.

The country was, first of all, in need of something besides the establishment of new manufactures. Frederic William said once, that he must procure for the considerable number of the cloth weavers their scanty living; and another time, that he wished to give employment to the poor inhabitants who were in the country. It is very true that the theory which he adopted was connected with exaggerated notions of ready money; but it was also of the most urgent necessity to rescue the trading part of the population from the ruin of becoming quite dependent on the foreigner with regard to the first necessities of life. Who would find fault with it, that domestic industry was opposed to foreign labour, and that it was endeavoured to produce at home the indispensable articles of daily life. The German nation durst not give up that active trade, which in former centuries had constituted such an important element in the life of the towns. Otherwise, the consequences of the thirty years' war, by which principally trade also had been ruined, would have been made perpetual.

As he was circumstanced, king Frederic William found the wants of the army a means of giving, at the same time, occupation to the branch of manufacture which he restored, and of procuring for it a never-failing market. He took care that the soldier should always appear in a neat dress, and every one of them be always provided with two suits. But he soon im-

posed upon the nobles and the rest of his subjects the duty of following, in this respect, his own example and that of his army, and of using for their own clothing, as well as for every other purpose, none but home-manufactured woollen goods.* And he prohibited the foreign manufactures, not only of this material, but also of cotton, to which his own country had nothing of the same kind to oppose. In November 1721, he ordered, that after eight months, nobody, either male or female, in the country or in towns,—for in this manner his edicts used to enumerate the different categories of the several parties concerned by them,—should wear fine or coarse cotton stuffs, under a penalty of one hundred dollars to the crown.† He knew the means of enforcing obedience, and seven years afterwards, it was asserted that no one thought any more of the foreign goods, and that they were replaced by woollen stuffs and linen manufactured in the country. But this would have been impossible, if the exportation of the wool, in which the refuse only was left for the home trade, had been continued. The so-called "*Wool Pragmatica*" of the king, and many explanatory edicts, tend entirely to prevent it. Arrangements were made to control the sale of the produced wool by the officers of the excise. Grievous complaints could not fail to be made, yet the king re-

* Edict, that after Jan. 1st, 1720, no foreign broad cloths, nor other woollen goods not manufactured in the country, should be worn or used. Mylius, vol. ii, p. 318.

† Mylius, vol. ii, p. 198.

plied, that in public affairs, the interest of individuals had always to give way to the common good.

But lest after so many oppressive restrictions, bad workmanship might, after all, be inflicted upon the public, he ordered a strict supervision to be kept over the different trades. Regulations were given to the cloth manufacturers how to clean the wool, to sort it according to its quality, to make it pliable, and to comb it; how many stones of it were to be employed for every different sort of stuff; just in the same manner as once Colbert gave the most explicit technical regulations to the French trades. The syndics of the trades swore closely to examine the cloths when they came from the loom, from the mill, and from the dyer, and to give information of the defects which might be found, in order that they might be brought to condign punishment.* To the statutes of the company of the yarn weavers a table was added, from which every one might see how many yards of linen he had to demand for his yarn. In the years from 1734 to 1736, sixty of these corporations received new statutes, in order to remedy any abuses which might have crept in, and to assign each of them its proper sphere.† The five corporations also, which were suf-

* Regulations for the cloth and stuff weavers, and the syndics, Jan. 30th, 1723. Mylius, vol. ii, p. 335.

† Beckmann, *Description of the March of Brandenburg*, i, 1158. He also asserts, that the country had gained great fame in the empire, in Lorraine, Italy, Spain, and Brabant, by its fabrics of camlet, fustian, and other stuffs, and that the woollen goods of the March were not inferior to the other manufactures of Europe, either in quality or in variety.

ferred to exist in the country, were bound by restrictive laws to the companies of the towns. In the towns themselves, it was decided according to the number of the inhabitants, and the amount of the demand, how many traders in one or the other branch might be still wanting, and find their living there. Foreigners who would apply to be received were offered considerable advantages; natives were admitted only when they were able to show that they could not make a living in the place of their abode. Work was, as it were, organized in a monarchical system.

There is no doubt but that these endeavours had, on the whole, a very prosperous result. The trade itself could in a short time compete with its neighbours: the blue cloths of Berlin got a certain name in Europe. It was a still more important advantage, that the population of the towns in the March was again on the increase. According to the still existing, although incomplete lists, it cannot be estimated, in the years 1713 and 1714, to more than 100,000, nearly half of whom belonged to Berlin; in the year 1723, concerning which we have exact information, there were in the towns of the March 137,945; and in the year 1739, 206,520 inhabitants. The population had in these last years increased one-third, and during the whole reign probably one-half. In the capital, the number of inhabitants increased to 80,000, exclusive of the garr which amounted to 16,000 men. ng classes were by these

Yet the nobility would have been very wrong to complain of the restrictions which were imposed upon it. The increasing consumption, which would not otherwise have been possible, reacted beneficially upon agriculture. What has been said, that there was not an acre in England which derived no benefit from the increase of London, found also here its application, although on a lesser scale. The Middle and Uker March, above all, must gain by the neighbourhood of Berlin: the Uker March is spoken of as the granary of the capital. But also the other provinces beyond the Oder and the Elbe began to sell there the surplus of their corn. What was lost on the wool, was made up by the sale of the corn. The king would have never allowed its price to fall too low.

I hope that some one, who is more conversant with this subject of the political economy of Frederic William, will one day give a more explicit description; yet I may be allowed to mention one more example of it. Corn was never far below a certain market price. How often at Königsberg, or at Tilsit, with free importation from Poland, might not the same quantity have been bought for the eighth or the sixth part of a dollar, for which now at least the fourth part was paid! The chief reason of it was, that the king himself would not allow his farmers to become insolvent, but the arrangement benefited all the landed proprietors. Care was, however, taken in behalf of the towns and the militia, by the price not being allowed, on the other hand, to rise too high. In times

of bad harvests and scarcity, the royal magazines were thrown open which had been filled in years of plenty, and these precautions proved often the greatest blessing. In the year 1736, for instance, when in the neighbourhood in Poland and Silesia, all the miseries of a famine were to be endured, the Brandenburg countries had not to suffer any particular distress: the peasant was assisted by a supply of grain for seed, which he returned after the harvest.

The well-regulated economy of the state was to raise it above the chances of human exertions, and the fluctuations of nature.

It has been considered as the principal reason why the ancients occupied themselves so little in a scientific manner with financial questions, that the problem to be solved was this, to provide for ever fluctuating necessities by means of ever fluctuating revenues, but now the object was, on the contrary, to keep a constant balance between the demand and the supply, and to develope them at an equal ratio.

Frederic William established the General Directory, a board which was chiefly to work for the attainment of this object.

It was well known that the immediate cause for its establishment were the differences which broke out between the commissariat of the army, which managed the military taxation in the towns, and in the country the excise and the contribution; and the financial directory, which superintended the farming of the demesnes. Their powers, which were of differ-

ent origin, would not unfrequently clash with each other. In one case, the prince appeared as a great landed proprietor, like his nobles; in the other, as the supreme general. It happened that the chambers for the administration of the demesnes made concessions to the lessees, which were contrary to the relations of the commissariat, and put their formal signatures to complaints, which the estates raised against it. By the general rivalry in the service, which the earnestness and the vigilance of the king had aroused, the evil was rendered still more conspicuous.

Hereupon Frederic William determined to unite the two boards. As it seems, this plan was first hinted in conversation by Leopold of Dessau; the king adopted it entirely as his own, and devoted all the energy of his mind to its developement and execution. It deserves to be mentioned in what manner he proceeded with it.

During a solitary sojourn at Schönebeck in December 1722, Frederic William wrote with his own hand the minute of an instruction, with all the details. It was his ambition in it that nobody should have to find any essential fault with it. The manuscript has very properly been preserved. It contains the whole groundwork of that instruction for the general directory which has afterwards become of so great importance.

In order to bring it into a concise form, the king, after his return to Potsdam, summoned his private secretary Thulemeier. In quite a homely manner, he

invited him to come to him the following day, which was a Sunday, in the afternoon, at two o'clock, provided with writing materials, good strong paper, "and black and silver thread for stitching the sheets," and to make such arrangements that he might remain for a couple of days. Here the contents were once more considered, and the utmost care taken to lay down everything in clear and precise expressions, which might leave no room for mistakes. Owing to various interruptions, which were unavoidable at Potsdam, it was not until the 14th January that they finished it. Some copies were yet to be made; and then, without delay, they proceeded to carry the scheme into execution.

On January the 19th, 1723, the members of the two boards, the general commissariat, and the directory of finances, who had not yet the foreboding of the change that awaited them, were summoned into a room in the castle. Ilgen—who, as we see, was as actively employed in the domestic affairs, as in the foreign ones—read out to those present a letter in which the king informed them of his intention, not, however, without mixing up with the general censure many very personal ones. The provincial commissariat of the electoral March, which had until now been united with the general board, was now separated from it, and, immediately afterwards, the members appointed to it withdrew. Those who remained were led by Ilgen into the new office fitted up for the gene-

ral directory, where he assigned to every person his place, and read, standing near the portrait of the king, the instructions, of which he gave a copy to each of the appointed ministers, placing another on the table. Hereupon, first, the ministers, then the counsellors, went into the audience room, where the king was waiting for them, and took a new oath to him. They pledged themselves in it, to promote with all their might the interest and welfare of his majesty, and especially the augmentation of his revenue, and the conservation of his subjects.

This was no empty phrase, but the meaning and the object of the whole administration.

The ministers are made answerable for it that all should be paid in, that is mentioned in the estimates. The lessees may, after the expiration of the quarter, be granted a respite of ten days, but not one hour more. Contribution and excise must be brought in most promptly, in order that at the end of every month the regiments may punctually receive the orders for their pay. But with all this, no tax was to be laid on which the subject would not be able to afford. In the contribution, the strictest equality is to be observed, and the excise is to examine the royal carriages just as much as any other. The principal object must be to improve the condition of the peasant, and to raise the towns to a flourishing state.

The instruction for "The General-Superior-Finance-War-and-Demesne-Directory", for this was the title of

the combined board, consists of thirty-four articles, many of which have twenty to thirty paragraphs.* No extract could give a correct idea of its contents. To put forth particular passages might give a false impression. Let it suffice to set forth its general purport.

Its principal object was, as I have already mentioned, the restoration of a greater unity.

In the provinces also, the chambers and the commissariat were united. Concerning these the king made the concession, that one functionary might devote himself more to one, and another more to the other branch. He demands, however, from them, the most exact knowledge of their particular department. The councillor, for instance, who has the charge of the towns, is to know their condition with regard to trade and commerce, poverty and means of livelihood, their citizens and inhabitants, with the same exactness that a captain does the state of his company. On the other hand, the members of the supreme board were to be familiar with both of the branches, with agriculture as well as with municipal administration. Here there were always several provinces united in a division under one minister,—the eastern ones were taken in hand by Grumbkow, the middle ones by Kraut, the western by Creuz and Görne,—yet every division had a particular day fixed for deliberation.

* Printed in Förster's *Frederic William II*, 173, perhaps the most remarkable among the welcome pieces of information which this book contains. Cf. Rödenbeck, i.

For the decrees which were resolved upon, they were collectively responsible. The king reserved to himself the presidency of the whole. As the idea had been moulded in his mind, so he likewise showed an unwearied activity in carrying it out into practice, convinced that he thereby was settling the prosperity of the country, and the power of his crown, on a safe foundation.*

Times might arrive afterwards, when an institution of this kind was no more sufficient; but at that period, it was the means of great progress. Instead of exclusively pursuing particular interests, the administration was raised in the centre of the state on a commanding point, from which it was enabled to survey the general wants, and the ways in which to provide for them. The idea of a commonwealth was in some sort represented here. In the politico-economical experiments since the days of Colbert, the most important point, on the whole, is this, perhaps, that the impost,—in the literal meaning of the word, a burthen and nothing more, in which light many still continued to look upon it,—was now brought into immediate connexion with the political system and the general progress.

In Prussia, it now only first became possible systematically to regulate the economy of the state.

The attempt had been made to establish a cham-

* Autograph. "I am only seeking the welfare of the country and the people, the settlement of the army and of the crown; for I am persuaded that it would be settled by this combination, if they only chose to pull faithfully and cheerfully together."

ber of accounts, which, however, consisted of two boards, one for the demesnes, and the other for the military taxes. These were now likewise united, and subjoined to the general directory. At the auditing of the accounts of the provinces, every time, a member of that department, to which the accounting province belonged, was to go to the superior board of accounts, take the chair in it, and then report whatever he had observed to the directory. The accounts of the general treasury, the board of accounts was to examine; the directory alone was to approve of them.

The making an abstract of the chief accounts in due form, did not present the least difficulty. The first of this description was completed in 1724; "an important work, as it is said in the declaration, for which some thousand receipts and vouchers had to be gathered from all the provinces with indescribable trouble, and for which a whole ream of paper had been taken up."

The accounts were always from the 1st of June to the 31st of May of the following year, and the sums at least of the items, in which, however, the two treasuries were kept distinct, are since entered in the records of the general directory.

At first sight, it might appear as if the total revenue had been raised much higher than what had until now been supposed from insufficient information.

In the year 1724, the general treasury of the demesnes sums up with nearly three millions; in the 1726, with more than three and a-half; in 1727,

with somewhat more than four millions: the general war treasury in the first of the above-mentioned years, with 3,800,000; in the second, with more than 4,200,000; in the third, with 4,600,000 dollars; and one would believe that now the total revenue had amounted to more than eight and a-half millions a-year. Yet this was not the case. The treasury of the demesnes had, besides a fixed residue of 150,000 dollars, a floating one, which was composed of the outstanding arrears of the last years, and the advances made for the single branches, and which was accounted for under the head of the revenue. In the year 1726, it amounted to more than 800,000 dollars; in others, less; yet always enough to form a considerable deduction from the receipts. In the military treasury likewise, a residue is found, although a much less considerable one; in the year 1726, of somewhat more than sixty thousand; in the year 1727, of about 140,000 dollars, and gradually increasing. Especially, however, the military treasury received a very considerable advance from the administration of the demesnes, which was accounted for under the head of the revenue; and which, in the years 1726 to '27, amounts to nearly 750,000 dollars. If we deduct these items, the sum total of the two sorts of revenue does not amount, after all, to more than seven millions of dollars.

If the economical basis on which these revenues rest had not been sufficient, it would have soon no more been possible to get them in; but indeed we find them continually increasing.

In the electoral March, for instance, the military revenues, which in 1728 amounted to 669,544 dollars, rose in 1733 to 771,545, consequently to somewhat more than 100,000 dollars. If we inquire more accurately what was the cause of this, we find it not to have been the contribution, which was fixed for ever, nor the impost, which was called the war tithe, which latter increased by scarcely a thousand dollars. The whole of the augmentation resulted from the octroi of Berlin, which increased by 15,000 dollars, and especially of the excise itself, the revenue of which augmented from 365,000 to 450,000 dollars. The improvement in the tax on consumption was caused by the growth of the population in the towns, and by the brisker trade of the citizens.

The same was the case on the whole in Prussia. The receipts of the excise, and of the duty on liquids, were fluctuating according to the condition of the crops, and the nature of the harvest; yet they were on the increase. In the year 1727, the excise from the small towns brought in 78,000, and the duty on liquids, 22,000 dollars; in the year 1733, the former, 105,000, and the latter, 42,000 dollars. At Königsberg, the excise produced in the year 1728 little more than 100,000 dollars; in the year 1736 (which, it is true, was particularly productive, on account of the presence of King Stanislaus and his Poles), 140,000; but in each of the others also, about 130,000 dollars.*

1728	.....	104,000 dollars.	1736	.....	141,089 dollars.
1732	.....	119,500 „	1737	.....	132,928 „
3	.....	125,956 „	1738	.....	128,955 „

Thus the surplus of the excise at Halberstadt increased from 8,400 to 18,000 dollars; at Cleves, from 28,000 to 40,000 dollars.

By this means it became possible that the expenditure of the military treasury was augmented in the year 1726 already by half a million,—from 3,700,000 to 4,200,000 dollars,—and then, not only remained at this amount, but in the sequel of the reign, increased still by half a million to 4,700,000 dollars, which was about the surplus of the general revenue.

Yet the whole of this was not expended for the regiments alone. No inconsiderable part of it was laid out on the building of fortresses, especially at Magdeburg and Stettin. An account is extant, according to which, the building of fortresses in regular and extraordinary expenditure, from the 1st of June 1732, to September 1st 1733, cost upwards of two millions of dollars and a half (2,518,918).

The whole economy of the finances of the state was, however, arranged in such a manner, that extraordinary expenses might always be provided for.

In the first years, the debts of Frederic I were to be paid off, and the Pomeranian war to be carried on; then large estates were purchased, in two years alone, from 1717 to 1718, for 600,000; from June 1720 to January 1721, it had been possible to discharge the two millions which were required for the taking possession of Pomerania; in the meanwhile, the great work of the restoration of Prussia had commenced. Here the plague had carried off more than a

the inhabitants. Most of all, it had raged in Lithuania, in which as many as three-fourths of the otherwise scanty population had fallen under it ;* and the lands were everywhere overgrown with briars and weeds. To remedy this, the king deemed to be one of his most imperious duties. In the years 1721, 24, 26, 28, 31, 36, he was himself in Prussia,—he devised the plans, and watched over their execution. Lithuania was, as it were, to be colonized anew. In the year 1722, there arrived, as in the thirteenth century, great numbers of settlers, from Swabia, Franconia, and Lower Saxony. The king had them conveyed at his own expense from Halberstadt to Stettin, and from thence by ship to Königsberg; the houses were already built which were to be assigned to them; they received the implements of agriculture, in which the plough of the country gave way to that of Halberstadt. The number of these colonies might, about the year 1730, amount to 17,000. Nearly the same was the number of the Salzburgers, who found here the longed for asylum for their religious convictions, and now imprinted upon the whole community a marked character. In the year 1736, there existed already 332 villages, occupied by free peasants. The soil was more liberal than was expected. But, at the same time, Frederic William had raised ten well situated boroughs and villages, to the rank of corporate towns, where the corn produced was sold, or the cattle which had been bred was bartered

According to Schubert, Lithuania lost 154,445 men; from
or, that of the children born must be deducted.

with their Polish neighbours; where also, in the manner of the electoral march, woollen goods were manufactured; and the functionaries of the administration and judicature took their residence, and small garrisons were quartered. In this also, Leopold of Dessau assisted the king. At the request of Frederic William, he acquired a considerable part of the waste lands, and peopled them with colonies of the middle Elbe. For the construction of the magnificent castle, which he caused to be erected at Bubainen, he sent the workmen from his own hereditary country. Thus here, on the borders of the German world, a new creation arose. "The soil is cultivated again", the crown prince says, in a letter of 1739, "the country is peopled; we have more towns than ever we had before, and trade is beginning to flourish; the king has not been backward, either in his own endeavours, nor in anything which may encourage others; he has spared no expense,—hundreds of thousands of thinking beings owe to him their existence and their happiness".*

The king tried, besides, other agricultural undertakings in East Prussia; often, it is true, with greater expense than success. It made him sometimes quite unhappy to think, that in the five years from 1722 to 1727, more than three millions of dollars had gone to Prussia. What might he not have done elsewhere

* "Pour assurer la vie et le bonheur à un demi million d'êtres pensants."—To Voltaire, Insterbourg, 27th Juillet. *Œuvres de Voltaire*, l. iii, 631. We may be excused for having brought the expression nearer the truth.

with this money, and how little had been effected with it there!

Yet the other provinces were by no means neglected. In the year 1734, in ten towns of Lower Pomerania, buildings were erected, with the assistance of the king; houses and gates rose from the ground at Stettin; the harbour of Colberg and the pier of Anclam were put in repair. The provinces of Cleves and March received assistance, for the enlargement of the towns of Crefeld, Sonsbeck, Iserlohn, and for the support of their water-works, and their salt-pans. New settlers are found, in particularly great numbers, in the district of Magdeburg, in the town itself, in Genthin, Schönebeck, Salze; a colony from the Palatinate also was established there. Up to the year 1732, on the whole, two millions were spent for civil buildings, which profited every province according to its particular want. How many towns of the electoral March, especially in the cases which so often happened of calamitous fires, needed support, for their better re-construction? * In other places, the dykes were improved; for instance, at Spandau and Fehrbellin. A very successful work of its kind, was the reclaiming of the free marsh of the Havelland, where the wild rage of the waters, which covered the land over an extent of seven leagues, was broken by some great canals, with many connecting ditches, and more

* Buchholz (*History of the Electoral March*, v, 146) asserts that Lichen received in 1732, 26,000; Templin, in 1735, 30,000 dollars; and these are almost the smallest towns.

than thirty considerable dykes; and a soil was reclaimed from the elements, which was the one exactly suited for a Dutch model farm.* Thus, to the condition of the capital also a care without parallel was devoted. Fredericstown (*Friederichsstadt*), which had been much enlarged already by Frederic I, was now augmented by one-half. The large squares in the middle of the town, and at the three gates, the fine palaces in William-street (*Wilhelms-strasse*), some of them very conveniently situated between the court and the park, with spacious high rooms, and large saloons, which are in good proportion, and bespeak a solid wealth, most of them surrounded by extensive and shady plantations, are the works of those times. In the memory of the people, who do not easily forget the sufferings of the past, the compulsory measures have especially survived, which were had recourse to for the construction of those streets; and the existence of most men being at the best full of troubles, they became undoubtedly most onerous for many of them; but it is as true that the king, on the other hand, stepped in to their help, by exerting his own means. Many millions of bricks, sometimes also lime and timber, were furnished to the settlers.

At the same time, Potsdam was enlarged three-fourths of its former extent; whole forests were rammed into the deep morasses, in order to build on

* Büsching's *Journey to Kyritz*.—Description of the dykes and ditches according to the communications of a superior: the dykes in Borgstede, 433.

them the barrack squares in which the soldiers of his tall regiment were to be quartered; houses of the same height, and form, and colour,—every deviation would have been, as it were, wilfulness, since the king alone built, and the same wants prevailed everywhere. There, in the church, which he raised for the garrison, he caused a vault to be formed of marble, in which he wished to be buried himself, in the midst of his military establishment, not among his ancestors in the dome of Berlin.

In the year 1736, the sums paid for building amounted to nearly 350,000 dollars.

First of all, for outward magnificence, (yet at the same time with a view to make a different use of it, in urgent cases), silver plate was purchased, tables, the frames of mirrors, chandeliers; sometimes, quite in the old traditional manner, the goldsmiths of Augsburg were traded with. From 1729 to 1732, 600,000 dollars were spent in this way.

There existed, besides, an extraordinary chest, to cover unforeseen deficiencies; to render remission of taxes possible without causing confusion in the other accounts; or else to assist a new settler, or some trader who wanted it for a public purpose, with a loan which was called “the Albrecht” assistance, from the steward who paid it. We find it, for the most part, already exhausted in the first months of the financial year. After some hesitation, the king augmented it, his sort of administration, which, on the
ned no one but himself; and besides

this, he very often provided it with further supplementary means.

These royal chests appear as the great reservoirs in which the waters are gathering, in order immediately to be brought out again in various ways.

A great part of it was, however, always kept back. The surplus of the revenues flowed into the treasury, which on great occasions, (for instance, those Pomeranian treaties of peace), undertook to make the extraordinary payments, but was then instantly supplied and augmented again.

The most exaggerated opinions were then entertained concerning it. Foreign ambassadors, who were at Berlin, stated, some years before the death of the king, its amount to have been twenty millions. But in fact it amounted to seven, the full revenue of one year.

And how necessary was this reserve!

The keeping of an army, however great it was, would have been to no purpose as long as the means were not possessed of bringing it at any moment into the field, and of maintaining it there for a couple of years.

It had never been possible formerly to uphold, without foreign subsidies, the economy of a state which aimed at anything like military power. The most important result of the administration of Frederic William was this, that an army by far greater than any which had ever been raised, was supported merely by the home produce of the country. What is the

meaning of power but this, that it should be able to act freely of its own impulse and determination? This was precisely the object, and also the result of the whole system.

All co-operated and tallied. Never in the Roman-German world had the forces of one country been so resolutely taken in hand. The emperor Frederic II, who might perhaps be quoted, pursued, after all, in his administration of Naples, an object which was foreign to that country. Under Louis XIV, it not unseldom happened that Louvois opposed the intentions of Colbert. In Prussia, means and objects harmonized; and in all the departments there was only one spirit, which was the moving power of the whole.

If we want to get a conception of the activity with which Frederic William devoted himself to the administrative business of the country, we must look at the records in which he added his own decisions to the reports of his functionaries, or to the memorials of private persons. Sometimes, although rarely, they are rather explicit, being drawn up on uncommonly strong paper of a bluish grey, yet not inconvenient for the pen, on whole folio sheets, in lines which were by no means straight, in huge characters scarcely to be decyphered, written with haphazard spelling, and in an irregular style,—but as to the matter itself, always to the point, and sound at the core, even the slightest touches give his thoughts and his mind. He once justly directs the crown prince to study the administration of the country from his notes. These

details showed the working of his system, which was grounded more upon practice than on *à priori* theories.

Sometimes his orders convey the impression of a petty tyranny, as, for instance, when with the establishment of regulations for the extinguishing of fires, he orders the authorities to do away with all the dangerous fire-places, to surround them at a requisite height with a mud wall, and to have the racks removed which hung from the ceiling. If a functionary should neglect this, he was liable to make good the damage which might be done. Whoever caused a conflagration by his neglect, was to be punished by flogging. In this style, moreover, the demolition of the thatched and shingle roofs in the towns, the providing of fire hooks and fire engines, and the setting of fire watches, is enjoined. There are everywhere the most minute instructions combined with the severest penalties. It cannot besides be denied, but that the matter was of great importance in a financial point of view. The produce of civilization, achieved by the toilsome labour of men, such as houses and what is contained in them, must be protected as much as possible from the destructive power of the elements. If all precautions should still fail, care is at least taken that the individual shall not be ruined. The regulations which Frederic William laid down for mutual insurance, are among the first of their kind, and contain every clause essential for their purpose.

In every department he showed this careful atten-

tion. To the arrangements of the boards of health which he established, it was ascribed that infectious diseases were prevented. His boards of charity tried to engage private almsgiving, whether voluntary or compulsory, for supplying the absolutely necessary wants of the poor.

From his general system, it may be understood in what light he looked upon science. It must not indeed be believed that institutions which had already been founded had retrograded during his reign. At the universities a number of distinguished professors were employed, like Heineccius, Böhmer, Ludewig; the Society of Sciences possessed in Pott one of the greatest chemists of the age, and in Frisch a philologist of extraordinary compass of knowledge; nobody had, however, to hope for favour or promotion, but those who contributed to the public utility, and that to the immediate one as he understood it. In the Society of Sciences, he established a new department for the study of medicine and surgery, which became of considerable benefit for the army. At the university of Halle, he founded, in fulfilment of a wish, which at those times was often uttered, an especial professorship of economy, police, and financial matters, for the instruction of his functionaries, and gave it to a learned man, who, at the same time, knew the service. The members of the different faculties were to occupy themselves with the immediate wants of life; the jurists of Halle he commissioned to draw up a plan for a new common-law, and very remarkable are the views to

which he directed their attention.* According to these, the Roman law was to be maintained, but to be stripped of everything that originated in the particular constitution of the old Roman state, and made to agree with common sense, natural fairness, and the present state of the world. He wished especially to do away with those wearisome lawsuits, and to see all the statutes brought within the reach of the meanest capacity.

A similar tendency he tried to call forth in the Church. The preachers of all denominations were to instruct the souls under their charge merely "in the fear of the 'Lord and true practical Christianity'; never to utter anything of controversy which did not serve that purpose. He made it a duty himself to set the example of perfect tolerance. When Trinity church, which he had built for the new part of the town of Berlin, was opened on the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, he brought with him the silver communion plate, which was to serve for the use of one evangelical confession as well as for the other. He heard the two inauguration sermons: in the morning, the Reformed one; in the afternoon he came again to assist also in the Lutheran service. For his Roman Catholic soldiers, he not only approved of, but he also favoured the exertions of some Dominican missionaries. He had the names of those reported to him,

* Order of the faculty of the jurists at Halle, June 18th, 1714, communicated and commented on by Laspeyres in Reyscher's and Wilda's *Journal for German law*, vi, 88.

who did not at the usual periods confess themselves, well knowing that, without the most general religious obligation, the respect to an oath, neither his state nor his army could have existed.* With great zeal he took the Lutheran divines under his protection, leaning on the whole towards their doctrine.

Among the claims to which the nobility returned in the year 1713, there was also the right of dismissing the ministers of their villages when they were convicted of an offence. Frederic William answered, that, as the preacher had been examined and confirmed by the consistory in the name of the king as supreme bishop, so it must also judge whether he was to be dismissed; otherwise the patron would have a greater power than the consistory. But whilst, on the

* In a manuscript of the Corsini library, at Rome, there is a "Relatione delle missione negli stati del marchese di Brandenburg," probably dating from 1730, as mention is made in it of the rebuilding of a Roman Catholic church, erected eight years before at Potsdam, drawn from the reports of the nuncio at Cologne, in which the liberty of conscience prevailing in Brandenburg was highly extolled; also the Cistercian nuns in the district of Magdeburg were allowed to build churches. And moreover it is stated, that Frederic William stood personally on good terms with the abbot of Neuzelle, the suffragan of Hildesheim. "Ne son seguite e ne seguono molte conversioni. Lo stesso marchese sostiene a proprie spese i missionari che sino a Berlin, Potsdam e Spandau." Only they do not go so far as to presume that he had a predilection for the Romish faith. "Dichiarano non potersi azardar a presumere che il Mchse. di Brandenburg conservi dentro il suo core sentimenti propensi alla nostra santa religione stante, che potrebbono ancora tutte le cose essere effetti di mera politica." They make a point of speaking of him merely as marchese.

strength of his episcopal office, he gave protection, he on the other hand deemed it also to be his right to interfere with the outward observances of the Church. There appeared to him to be too many forms, holidays, and ceremonies, and it was not without arbitrary exercise of power that he tried to limit the latter especially. His orders already breathe the spirit of instruction which was peculiar to the age. The sermon is rendered by them yet more the main point in the meetings for worship than it was before. Quite in the spirit of the school of Spener, catechizing is strenuously recommended. In a part of the sermons, Luther's catechism is to be taken as a running text, and in other parts, in the order of its principal heads to be elucidated by quotations from Scripture, and the sermon publicly repeated in the churches by question and answer. Baptism and communion were to be preceded by the instruction in this form of those who partook in it; even of the older people. The Christian doctrines were to be understood by all and everybody, and to become the common property of the people.

In this spirit he tried to improve the school-system also. Whatever was to serve merely for the adornment, or the learned exercise of the mind, found no favour with Frederic William, not more than rhetoric formerly did at Sparta. What he cared for was the wants of the common man. In the provinces of Prussia, nearly a thousand schools were founded during his reign, and the attendance was compulsory. It could not

that he established the instruction for confirmation, and ordered nobody to be admitted to it but those who could read. The disciples of Spener, likewise, who preached practical Christianity, would not hear of any other unprofitable instruction. They first resolutely pointed out, how it ought to apply itself to the interests of real life.

In the Asylum for Soldiers' Orphans, where the tongues "of many hundred children" prayed for the king, in this respect also a beginning was made which met with universal imitation. If burghers and peasants in the country of Brandenburg were more extensively, and earlier than elsewhere, drawn into the pale of human civilization, Frederic William I has laid the foundation for it.

It needs not to be mentioned, that we are not dealing here with a commonwealth, in which the free capacities of men, by their own impulse, develop themselves in a manner conformable to nature. All originated with the supreme power, which had conceived the object, and now prescribed the means by absolute orders.

Everybody knows that, in spite of all this comprehensive spirit, the general state of affairs was still tinged with much that was arbitrary and oppressive.

The paramount regard which was paid to the military, in spite of every endeavour to avoid it, had this effect, that it encroached in a very invidious manner on other spheres of life. In the towns, the board on exercised an authority by which the ma-

gistrates were thrown into the shade. They were often no more elected, but merely appointed. The land councillors, who were at the same time deputies of the provinces, became dependent on the chamber in a manner very inconvenient for their constituencies. Not without reason, the nobility in general complained, that they had to comply with the decrees of the military chambers, and those of the demesnes, even in cases where those bodies had an interest contrary to their own. In the centre of the state arose the general directory with absolute authority. We find that the ministers in other branches complained, although rather timidly, that after having once risen to its highest degree of power, it carried everything else along with it. But sometimes also, under the special protection of the royal favour, upstarts could make their way, as, for instance, the notorious Eckart, who, after having gained the king's confidence by some proofs of skill for the augmentation of the revenue, proposed, and also undertook to execute things, owing to which the farmers of the demesnes, the stewards of the crown estates in the towns, and the presidents of the military chambers, and of those of the demesnes themselves, became very disaffected.

But, for all that, Frederic William never met with any real resistance. It is true that the Magdeburg nobility never submitted to the change in the fiefs which had been everywhere adopted. The most noble families are found on the list of the recusants. They caused every time the "canon" to be raised by p

an execution on their goods, but without any bitter feeling, and in the most friendly manner.* On the whole, only the nobles could have resisted. But these filled the army, which opened to them a way of life suited to their natural tastes. They could not seriously oppose an organization of the country, by which alone that military force was upheld to which they were proud to belong.

If one should ask, whether the state in its present phasis was the simple realization of necessary schemes, and whether the original idea could have been carried out in no other manner but this, I should not affirm it without some qualification. It is undeniable, that the excise, the farming of the demesnes, the arming of the people itself, might have been arranged in a different way. But every attempt of this kind had failed. Then, in the midst of the confusion of those conflicting elements, this monarch of most energetic mind had appeared, who saw in a distinct shape the general object of opposing to his powerful neighbours a state depending on itself, and therefore unassailable, and who, with the sure aiming glance of genius, discerned the means of attaining it, and carried it through without any human regard.

And if we now are particularly to mention his personal disposition, we must not hold it accountable for all the instances of harshness which may have occurred. There is nothing in which opinions have so entirely

* Bucholz relates
the execution as

officer who came to levy

changed, and progressively developed themselves, as in the acknowledgment of the respect which is due to the native dignity of man! It would be unjust to charge every violation of it, in old times, upon individuals, who also belonged to the spirit of a different century, and whose views of life were such as could have prevailed only at a certain particular period. Whatever Frederic William may have committed in the violent outbursts of his temper,—although all that is told of it may not be true,*—those about his person took no offence at it.

The very men whom from his youth he particularly esteemed, as the prince of Dessau and general Grumbkow, disdained, almost on principle, the cultivation of mind and intellect. Prince Leopold concealed, under the odd outside which he displayed, an immense deal of talent. In military, and also in administrative affairs, he exercised that incalculable influence rendered possible by conversation and continued correspondence upon the incipient thought; but he was selfish, calculating, impetuous, disdainful, by no means of so frank and ingenuous a nature as the king. He might have rather taken example from him, than

* How much in want of criticism are these reports, which most of the ambassadors sent in weekly, may be seen from the words of Valori, May 6, 1740. "On est sujet d'augmenter ses talents sur ce qu'il fait du bien ou on en affaiblit le mérite qu'il n'en reste rien. La plupart des premiers ministres qui approchent l'irritent contre tout le monde les premiers ministres récit, de ce qui se passe dans les premiers desavantageuses."

given him any. Grumbkow did not possess the genial vein, and the inventive spirit of the prince; but he had much more general refinement, and very useful and desirable talents. He was looked upon as the only man in the country to whose objections the king would listen at all, and who sometimes made him change his mind. It was he, for instance, who, towards the end of the reign, broke the exclusive authority which the divines of Halle enjoyed. But it is well known that he did not scruple to take a pension from Austria, and in order to retain the confidence, of which after all he was never quite sure, he did not shrink from any means, not the utterly odious one of bribing the underlings of the household. Grumbkow was far removed from the prolixity and avarice of his former confederate Seckendorf; he was rather prodigal, fond of pleasure, pithy and terse, cold-blooded and yet vehement, but always conscious of his anger. He made others feel the superiority which his own position gave him. He judges the king with forbearance. Sometimes he expresses himself in a manner as if he had better liked to be spared some difficult commission or other, and yet, for all that, he executed it with ambitious officiousness.

The king himself had never done anything else but what he pleased. His good-natured father, his mother, taken up with her pursuits in literature and music, had in his youth fulfilled every wish of his, and indulged him in every selfishness. Real political regard was not shown upon him a regard

for anybody, were entirely out of the question. At home, every contradiction was silenced. His mind was bent on the remodelling of his state, just like his great contemporaries Charles XII and Peter I, of whom the former plunged into foreign wars, and the other made the civilization of Russia his task. Frederick William, with equal original genius, placed himself at their side in establishing his administrative and military, his independent and exclusive state. The spirit of his court only pointed to the developement of power, and the performance of the duties of service. He himself knew of no other interest in life. His mind was continually occupied with the state of his boards and his regiments. He wanted to see with his own eyes how the corn is coming on everywhere; how the peasant lives; whether a battalion has got its full number, and a squadron better horses; whether a board really executed what it had been ordered to do for the benefit of the poor man. The seventy-six leagues from Berlin to Königsberg he travelled in four days, in an open four-seated carriage, on badly prepared roads. On the days of the great reviews his activity used to partake of an impetuous character. He rose as early as three o'clock in the morning, and his recreations afterwards were almost in the same style. At dinner, at which the generals appeared, the strong wines were not spared,—old Rhenish wine, Hungarian wine, and Pontac, after which the guests tried to cool themselves with English beer, and frequent draughts of water. For the night, others—as

it was often late in the autumn—looked out for a fire-side, but the king would not mind passing the night in a barn when all were shivering with cold. One of his punishments in the smaller inspections was, that from a commander who had been found remiss he refused to accept of the usual dinner, and hastened off to the nearest village, where at the inn he bespoke some rustic dish, or ate somewhere in the shade the cold collation which the prince of Anhalt had brought with him. Woe to him who had been guilty of speculation! Neither birth nor rank protected him from the extreme penalty yet aggravated by infamy. We see everywhere the imperious leader struggling with the naturally diverging tendencies of so many different dispositions; but he knew how to make them work together. The supervision which he exercised, indeed has this effect, that the offices in which the occupant might almost be tempted by the opportunities of easy gain were administered with unblameable integrity; the strict discipline which he exercised was responded to by sincere zeal, which the thriving establishment of such a grand monarchical commonwealth calls forth in the civil functionaries, as well as in the military.

The different qualities which composed the character of Frederic William remind us of a northern myth, in which Odin and Thor decide the fate of a growing hero. I order for him, says the first, that he shall live three ages of man; his race, says the other, shall perish with him. The one promises him fine arms, money, and goods; the other dooms him to want of

land, and severe wounds. I order for him that he shall appear worthy in the eyes of the best man, says Odin; to the people, Thor adds, he shall be hateful.*

For between weal and woe, between success and failure, the fate of man is wavering. To virtue and to noble achievements, a deficiency is attached, the proportion between which, as well in his natural disposition as in his acts, constitutes the sum of human existence.

To king Frederic William was denied what at the pinnacle of society might appear most easy, to enjoy life himself in serene and intellectual satisfaction, and to make others round him happy and content. We will not go back to what happened in his family, but a saying of the queen may here be recorded. The excellent qualities of heart and mind were once praised before her, which the empress her kinswoman displayed at the court of Vienna. She confessed that she could not equal her; but she added, that for the empress it was much more easy to develop her talents, as the world smiled upon her, but not so for herself, the queen, who had to pass her days in constant uneasiness.

This milder feature of existence was not granted to the king. But, on the other hand, he was allowed, in a brilliant sphere of action, which was suited to his natural talents, to establish a state which bore its vital power in itself; exclusive, with a marked charac-

* Gautrek's *Saga*; Jacob Grimm's *German Mythology*, 1818.

ter; striving upwards with energetic buoyancy; capable of developement within, powerful abroad, and full of blossom for the future

That Frederic William would himself bring all this to ripen into fruit, was no more expected. The awkward position in which he was placed with regard to the different European powers, of the greater of which one only stood in other than unfriendly relations with him, was partly owing to this cause, that the world was convinced that he would never show himself in earnest, and never strike the blow.

All eyes were already fixed upon the successor, whose capacities were not borne down by the domestic storms which he had to go through, but had been rather matured in the fullest developement; and who, although kept removed from all business, quietly grew up to be able to seize the reins himself. The old king would sometimes hint to those in his confidence, that the world did not know what lay concealed in that Frederic.

END OF VOL. I.











